GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE

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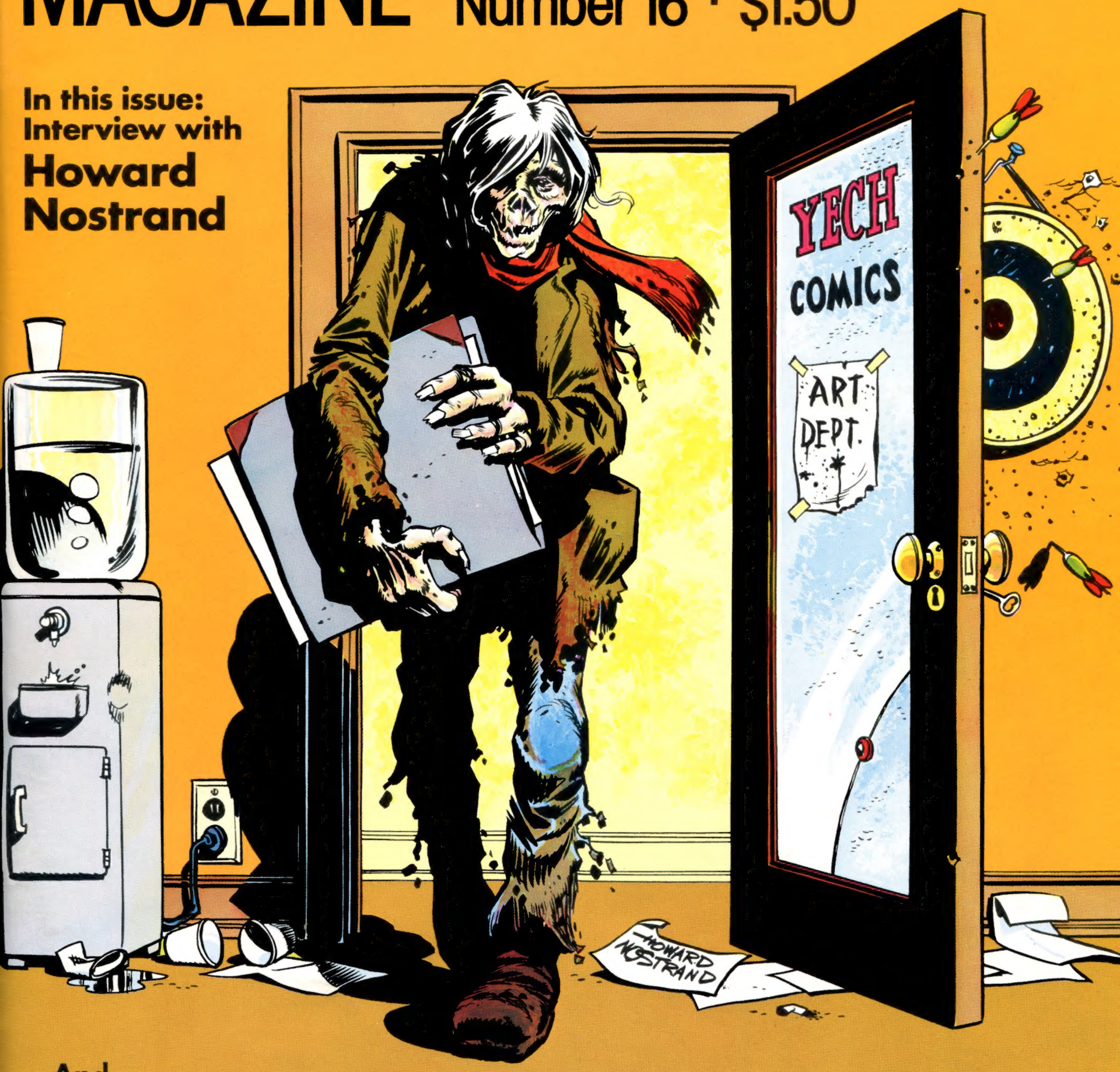
In this issue:
Interview with
Howard Nostrand



And...

Mark Evanier and John Pound:
THE WISHING WORLD

Basil Wolverton:
BERSERK BURK
THE HOTEL CLERK

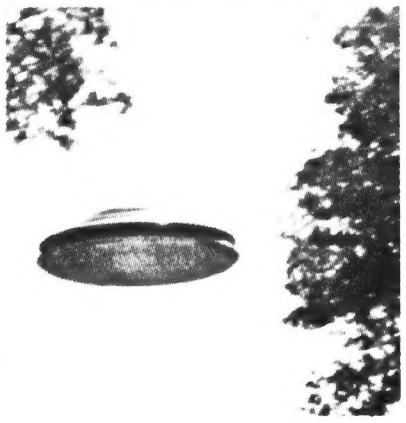
George Metzger:
ROUTINE

Bob Powell:
COLORAMA

GRAPHIC STORY MAIL

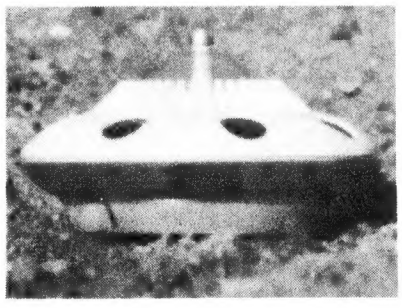
Carl Richardson
Shawnee, Oklahoma

Regarding your interview with Harry Harrison and his untrue and inane remarks about Flying Saucers, I am enclosing a photograph taken by Paul Villa on June 16th of 1963, offering proof that Flying Saucers do exist:



Many such photos have been taken; I am enclosing some others in the event you aren't familiar with them. Judging by your willingness to print anti-Saucer propaganda, you are not aware of historical documentation.

As further evidence I am sending also a photo taken by myself when one such craft landed on my property on November 3rd, 1970:



Not only did I enter and inspect the complex inner workings of this amazing craft, but I experienced the mind-awakening lesson of communication with its pilot and crew. I was not allowed to take pictures of them or the inside of their vessel (the exterior was taken from my kitchen window shortly after the moment of touch-down) but suffice it to say that this confrontation and subsequent knowledge obtained is noteworthy to us all. I have described the account in detail for numerous official publications and other periodicals such as newspapers and legitimate magazines, so I won't go into it here. See attached clipping. *(Flying Saucer Monthly, January 1971.)*

In the interview your own remarks are ill-stated as well. ". . . I think saucers were nothing more than another reflection of the McCarthy era" shows a brainwashed mentality eager to discredit the truth. It was a reflection, but not in the way you think. There is strong evidence that Senator McCarthy (one of the great Americans of this century or any other) was in fact acting as an agent of an interplanetary government which recognizes Communism for the evil it was and is. Radical creeps like Dorothy Healy, a Commie bigwig who recently renounced Party membership, has good reason to fear Saucers and UFOs because she knows they are out to destroy her philosophy espousing overthrow even when no longer a Party member. Had Healy been in my home on November 3rd of 1970, I doubt if she would be as free today with her vile outpourings as she is.

Ignorance breeds prejudice. Mr. Harrison is only expressing his prejudice and ignorance on the subject when he makes such uninformed remarks as stated in your interview. Has he ever seen a Saucer? Has he entered and flown in one? Obviously not. The people must be educated on the truth about Flying Saucers and other extraterrestrial vessels, the inhabitants of which seek only to help a sick, possibly doomed Mankind. I suggest you and Mr. Harrison discover the facts for yourselves. Send 50 cents for an issue of *Flying Saucers International*, Amalgamated Flying Saucer Clubs of America, 2004 North Hoover Street, Los Angeles, California 90027. To quote from their literature, you will learn: "Why spaceships and their crews from other worlds are visiting our planet; about their revolutionary propulsion power that outmodes all present forms of power on Earth; about their plan to help Mankind, and what you can do to help; about life on other planets, their science, philosophy, government and economic systems; how their advanced knowledge can help to resolve most of our present-day problems on Earth."

Look to the skies, gentlemen. Observe the heavens for the source of your salvation, and someday soon you will have the truth revealed to you as it was to me.

If you continue to print anti-Saucer material in your science fiction magazine (it certainly isn't science fact), I must ask you to cancel my subscription.

Tom Greeniones
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Gahan Wilson's stuff *is* funny, and that's always a lot. But life always has two sides, and he is in vogue because his humor sanctions and normalizes people's sick and ugly feelings. Self-destruction is the byword these days, and he may be so into it that we need to laugh about it, but I can think of better values to build my life around. From his interview I'm reminded of a breed of professionals I've met who, while talented as all get out, are real Charlie Browns in the personality department. They all seem to suffer from the "Auschwitz mentality" that recognizes an intolerable situation but always finds a way to rationalize its way through the next load.

Harrison is harsh, but correct about Kirby. To me, Kirby is a valuable artist. His great talent is to be one of those rare creators who can take in impressions of the contemporary scene on many different levels, bring them together, synthesize them, and yield dynamic working images or "grotesques" as Riskin (I think) called them. The Firesign Theater is an even better example. Kirby's a gold mine to the student of media, but that's no guarantee he's together intellectually.

On another front, I'm becoming concerned with a very serious

continued on page 14

GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE #16, Summer 1974. Published at 329 North Avenue 66, Los Angeles, California 90042 USA. Bill Spicer, editor and publisher; contributing editor, Bhob Stewart. Subscriptions are 4 issues for $5.00; single copies, $1.50. Editorial contents ©1974 by William W. Spicer. Harvey Comics art ©1974 by Harvey Inc., used by permission. Interview text ©1974 by Robert Stewart.

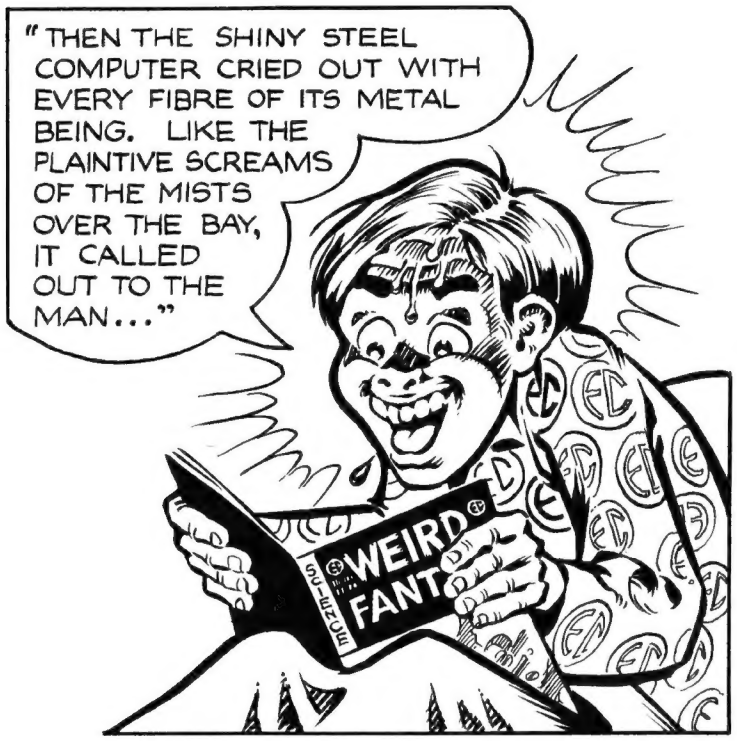
THE WISHING WORLD

THE WOMAN PRESSED HERSELF UP AGAINST HIS SIDE. THE DISTANT WHINE OF SIRENS ON THE MACHINE LEVELS BELOW WAS ALL THAT IMPINGED ON THE CALM STILLNESS. THE MAN GREW STRONGER AT HER WARM TOUCH, FOR IT WAS A GRIM REMINDER THAT HER LIFE WAS AT STAKE HERE, ABOVE AND BEYOND THOSE BILLIONS BELOW ON EARTH. FINALLY, HE BROKE THE LULL IN THE SILENCE WITH WORDS OF CONFIDENCE... UNSURE AT FIRST... BUT INSTANTLY REAFFIRMED WITH THE SOUND OF AN ULTIMATE COSMIC DETERMINATION...

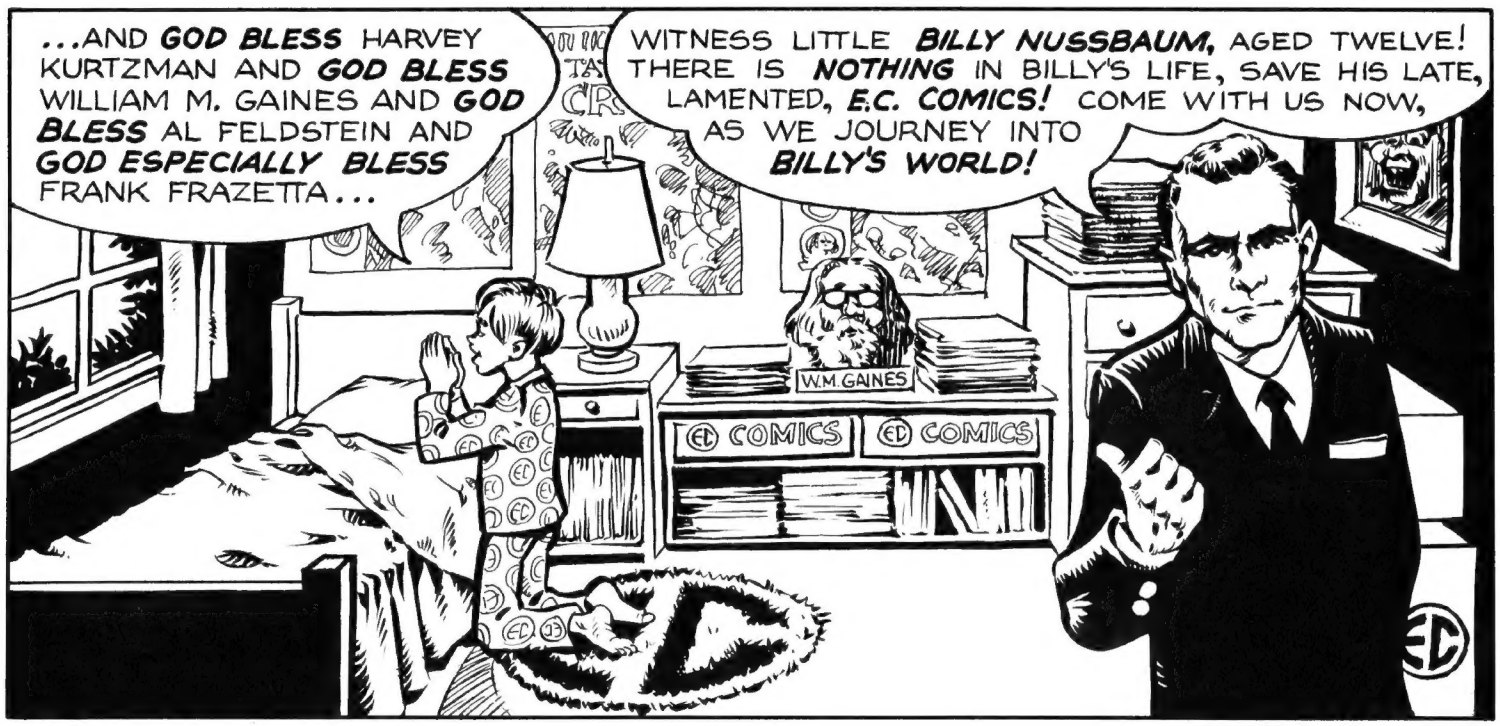
COURAGE, JEAN! THIS ONSLAUGHT IS BUT THE *PRELIMINARY RAID!* WE'LL LET THE ENEMY PLAY ITS HAND OUT... *THEN WE RETALIATE!*
BY MARK EVANIER AND JOHN POUND

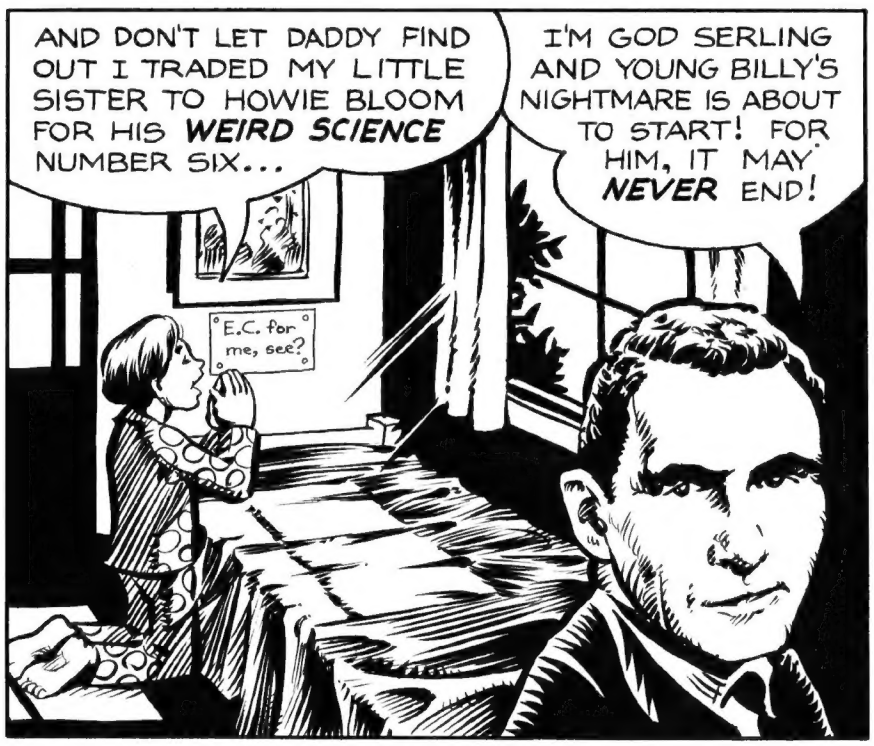
THE DIALS SHOW ENOUGH POWER TO *WITHSTAND* THEIR NEXT *TWO* ATTACKS! THEN, WE'LL *STRIKE BACK* WITH A POWER *GREATER* THAN THEIR *ATOMIC-POWERED WEAPONRY*... THE POWER OF *LOVE!*

THE THUNDER OF ROCKETS WAS MUFFLED BY THE VACUUM OF SPACE. YOU COULD HEAR A PIN DROP AS THE AWESOME, THROBBING POWER OF THEIR SILVERY MISSILES WAS UNLEASHED... ALL WITH SPLIT-SECOND ACCURACY...


"THEN THE SHINY STEEL COMPUTER CRIED OUT WITH EVERY FIBRE OF ITS METAL BEING. LIKE THE PLAINTIVE SCREAMS OF THE MISTS OVER THE BAY, IT CALLED OUT TO THE MAN..."
WEIRD FANTASY
MOZART-NOS

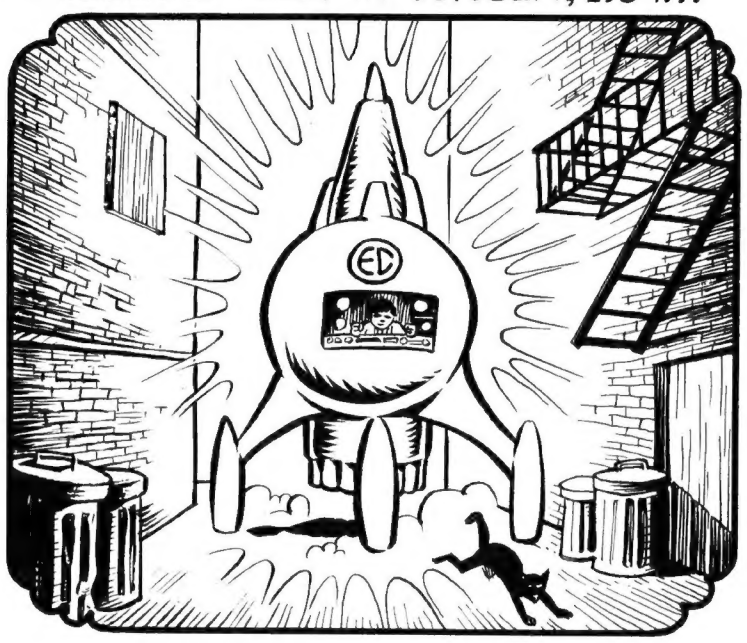
THAT'S ENOUGH FOR TONIGHT! IF I READ MORE THAN FOUR PAGES, I USUALLY END UP WETTING MY BED!
NOW I'LL REPLACE THIS PRICELESS E.C. COMIC IN ITS SPECIAL, PROTECTIVE PLASTIC BAG!
WEIRD FANTASY
COMICS


...AND GOD BLESS HARVEY KURTZMAN AND GOD BLESS WILLIAM M. GAINES AND GOD BLESS AL FELDSTEIN AND GOD ESPECIALLY BLESS FRANK FRAZETTA...
WITNESS LITTLE BILLY NUSSBAUM, AGED TWELVE! THERE IS NOTHING IN BILLY'S LIFE, SAVE HIS LATE, LAMENTED, E.C. COMICS! COME WITH US NOW, AS WE JOURNEY INTO BILLY'S WORLD!
W.M. GAINES
EC COMICS
EC COMICS


AND DON'T LET DADDY FIND OUT I TRADED MY LITTLE SISTER TO HOWIE BLOOM FOR HIS WEIRD SCIENCE NUMBER SIX...
I'M GOD SERLING AND YOUNG BILLY'S NIGHTMARE IS ABOUT TO START! FOR HIM, IT MAY NEVER END!
E.C. for me, see?

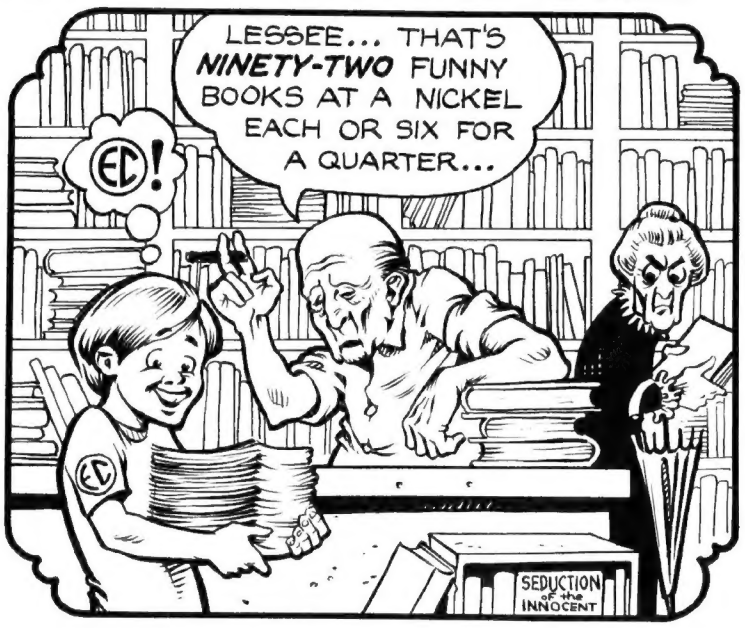
SLEEP COMES SWIFTLY TO THE LAD. BEFORE YOU CAN SAY "JACK DAVIS" BILLY IS DREAMING OF THE GLORIOUS SPECTACLE OF THE E.C. COMIC BOOKS THAT WERE PUBLISHED IN THE FIFTIES.

ONE OF BILLY'S FAVORITE DREAMS BEGINS WITH HIS TIME MACHINE SETTING DOWN IN A DESERTED ALLEY IN OCTOBER, 1954...



IN HIS DREAM, HE EAGERLY LOCATES HIS GOAL— A SECONDHAND BOOKSTORE OF THE PERIOD...

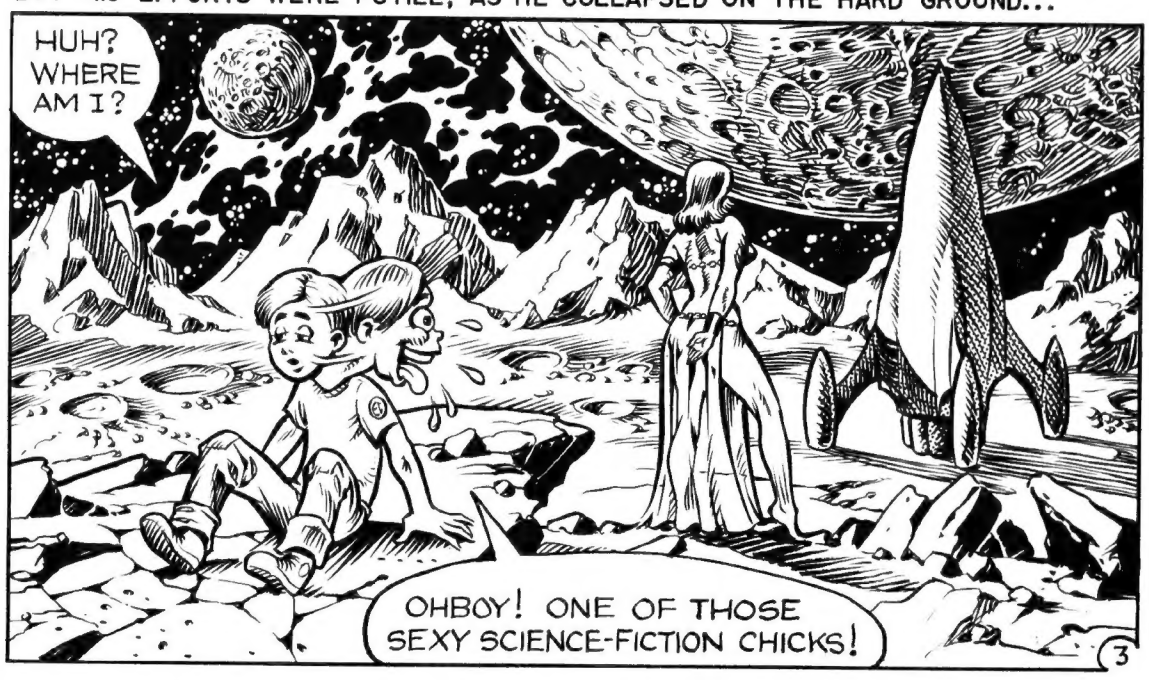
HE BUYS EVERY ***E.C. COMIC*** IN THE STORE, PAYING FOR THEM WITH PRE-1954 MONEY OBTAINED FROM A COIN SHOP OF HIS DAY...



THEN SOMETHING UNEXPECTED HAPPENS THAT WAS NEVER PART OF BILLY'S DREAM BEFORE...

FOR LONG MOMENTS, ALL IS A CONSTANT BLUR...

THEN SUDDENLY, THE THICK MIST LIFTED TO REVEAL ALL! BILLY TRIED TO WALK, BUT HIS EFFORTS WERE FUTILE, AS HE COLLAPSED ON THE HARD GROUND...



HEY LADY! CAN YOU TELL ME WHERE I AM?

INDEED I CAN! YOU ARE WITHIN THE PAGES OF A SCIENCE-FICTION COMIC BOOK!

YOU'RE KIDDING!

BILLY REACHED UP TO INSPECT THE WORDS FLOATING OVERHEAD.

SURELY, YOU MUST RECOGNIZE THE LETTERING!

?

LEMME GET A LOOK AT THAT, UP CLOSE!

RID YOURSELF OF IT QUICKLY, WILLIAM!

HEY! I'D RECOGNIZE THAT LETTERING ANYWHERE—I ***AM*** IN A COMIC BOOK! FAR OUT! I WONDER WHAT ISSUE!

I'LL LEAVE THIS NICE LETTERING DOWN HERE FOR THE TIME BEING! THAT'LL LOOK ***DANDY*** ON MY WALL!

ON YOUR ALERT, WILLIAM! DANGER IS ALMOST UPON US!

GHAAACK! ...WHAT'S THAT? IT LOOKS LIKE A MESS OF ***WHITEFISH!***

THE DREADED THREEBLE APPROACHES TO CLAIM ITS VICTIM... YOU!

SQUA TRONT!

SPA FON!

...ALL THAT JAZZ!

HMMM... FORGET THE KID— I'LL JUST TAKE THAT BROAD!

BILLY REACHED UP TO INSPECT THE WORDS FLOATING OVERHEAD.

IT HAS ME IN ITS CLUTCHES! IT IS CRUSHING THE VERY LIFE OUT OF ME!

SAVE ME, WILLIAM! ICK! IT FEELS LIKE WHITEFISH, TOO!

HEY—I DID THAT FOUR PANELS AGO!

SQUA FON! SEA HUNT!

YECHH! AND DOUBLE ***YECHH!*** IT'S GOOSHING THAT PRETTY LADY! I'D BETTER ***DO SOMETHING!***

SHE'S SCREAMING IN STARK TERROR! I'D BETTER ***DO SOMETHING!***

NO ONE'S SAFE AS LONG AS THAT CREATURE ROAMS! I'D BETTER ***DO SOMETHING!***

SPA TRONT!

GAAAGH!

eeeek!

NO!

ICKEY-POO!

BLURBP!

urk

I'D BETTER MOVE MY ASS ...AND FAST!

I'LL HEAD FOR THAT ROCKET!

STEALTHILY, BILLY CLIMBED INTO THE ROCKET AMONGST MACHINERY THAT GLISTENED LIKE AN ANGEL'S BREATH...

HEY—THIS IS NEATO! I REMEMBER THIS PANEL FROM A STORY IN ***INCREDIBLE SCIENCE-FICTION!***

IT WAS REPRINTED IN MY 3-D BRAILLE EDITION!

GUM

WASHOMATIC®

OH BOY! ***STAR TREK'S*** ON! I HOPE IT'S THE ONE ABOUT THE TRIBBLES!

THAT'S A VISI-PHONE CALL FROM MY BROTHER ON PLUTO, IF YOU DON'T MIND!

CALLING SAFFYRE! CALLING SAFFYRE! COME IN, SAFFYRE!

YOUR SHIP IN DANGER! COMPUTER CO-ORDINATES INDICATE SPACE-BODY INTERCEPT AT 0300 HOURS! ACTIVATE METEOR FORCE-FIELD!

I'M SENDING OUT A RED ALERT!

I'M ON MY WAY!

WHAT'S THAT?

IT'S A PRETTY SEEDY SIGHT GAG, IF YOU ASK ME!

SAFFYRE! SAFFYRE! DANGER LURKS!

GOTTA GET A MOVE ON!

COSMIC PARTICLES APPROACH OUR VESSEL TO WREAK HAVOC AND MUTATIONS TO OUR VERY CELL STRUCTURE!

ANY MINUTE NOW, ANY OF US COULD BE TRANSFORMED INTO A FIERCE, INHUMAN ABOMINATION!

GOLLY! I DON'T WANT THAT TO HAPPEN TO ME!

NO SIR!

AARRRGHH!

I'M CHANGING! I'M CHANGING!

AARRGHH! HE'S CHANGING! HE'S CHANGING!

I'VE CHANGED! WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?

THAT'S EASY! GET ON "LET'S MAKE A DEAL" AND HOLD OUT FOR THE BOX ON JAY'S TRAY!

COME TO ME NOW, WILLIAM! COME TO ME! WE HAVE SO LITTLE TIME TOGETHER! EVEN NOW, METEOR FRAGMENTS ARE DESTROYING THIS SHIP! LET US SPEND THESE PRECIOUS MOMENTS TOGETHER!

?

CRASH!

WILLIAM, YOU CAN ASK ANYTHING OF ME! ANYTHING YOU WANT!

ANYTHING?

ANYTHING!

ANYTHING?

ANYTHING AT ALL!

GANGWAY!

ZZIP!

I WILL DO ANYTHING FOR YOU!

...WOULD YOU CARE TO SIGN A PETITION TO ABOLISH THE COMICS CODE?

WHIZZ!

pucker

NO, I DON'T SUPPOSE SHE WOULD!

GEE, I DON'T LIKE IT HERE IN THE LEAST! ...MAYBE THERE'S ***MORE*** TO LIFE THAN E.C. COMICS! MAYBE I SHOULD ***BROADEN*** MY HORIZONS!

TOMORROW, I START BUYING MARVEL COMICS, TOO!

YIKES! NOT ONLY ISN'T THIS COMIC WHAT IT'S CRACKED UP TO BE, BUT THE FLOOR'S GIVING WAY!

TANG

...WHOLE LOTTA SHAKIN' GOIN' ON!

CRACK!

YEOW! LOOK OUT BELOW!

BAD NEWS, GHOULS! OUR KITCHEN IS AS BARE AS JOSE FELICIANO'S ART GALLERY!

KLUMP!

AND TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, THE CEILING'S FALLING IN!

HEH HEH! WELL, LOOK WHAT DROPPED IN! JUST IN TIME FOR DINNER!

FEAST YOUR EYEBALLS ON THAT PLUMP RUMP! IT'S MANNA FROM HEAVEN!

WELL, WELL, WELL! I DO HOPE YOU'RE ORGANICALLY-GROWN!

OH NO! IT'S THE E.C. HORROR COMIC HOSTS!

© CRYPT OF TERROR

THUMP!

AND SO...

THIS'LL BE A BETTER MEAL THAN WE HAD AT McDONALD'S!

...WHICH REMINDS ME—ANYTHING LEFT OF THAT CLOWN? HE WAS DELICIOUS!

I'LL CARVE! YOU WANT LIGHT MEAT, DARK MEAT, OR SHALL I JUST YANK OFF A DRUMSTICK?

IT'S OUR KIND OF PLACE!

...choke!...

Menu
NUSSBAUM A LA CARTE

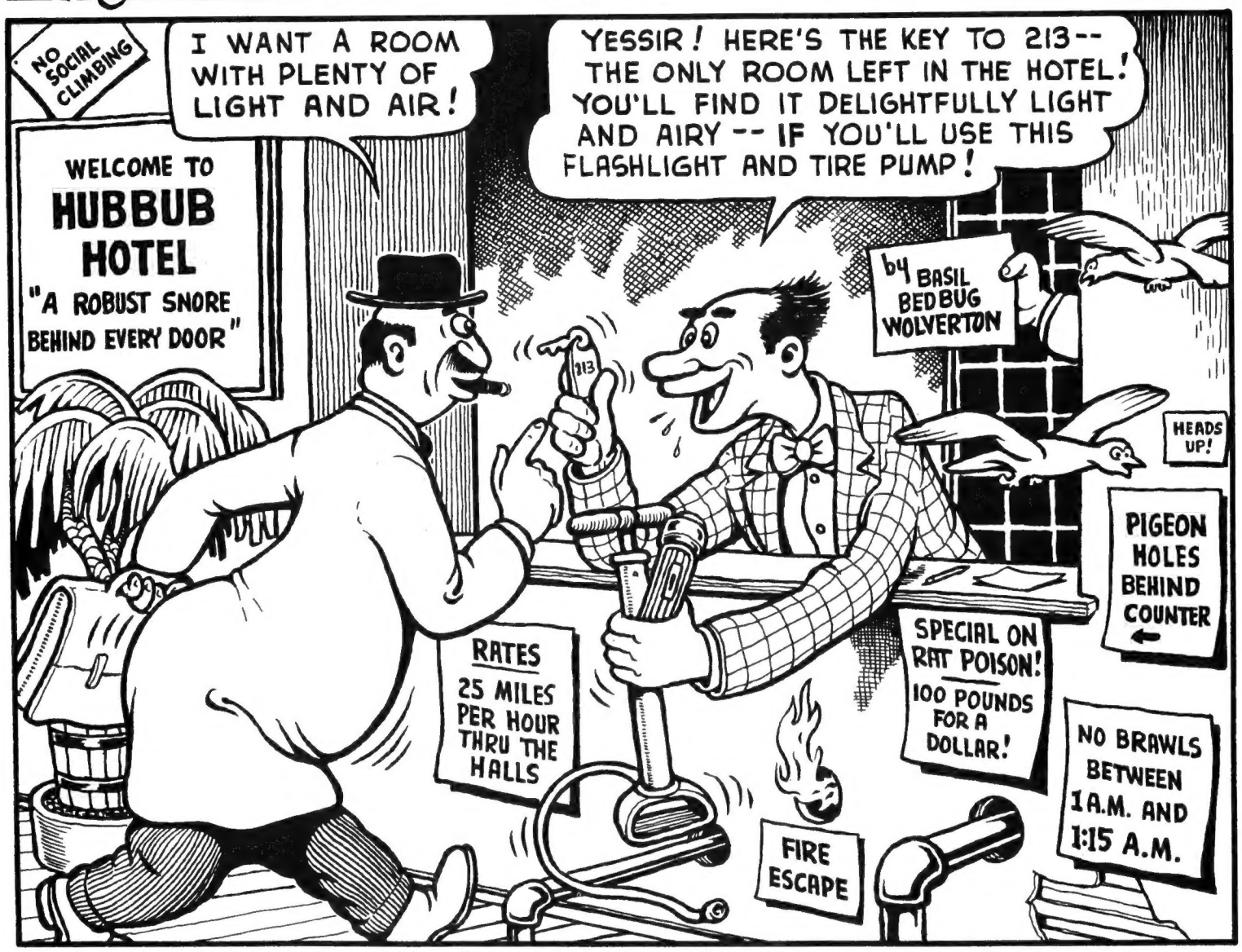
JEWISH COOKING

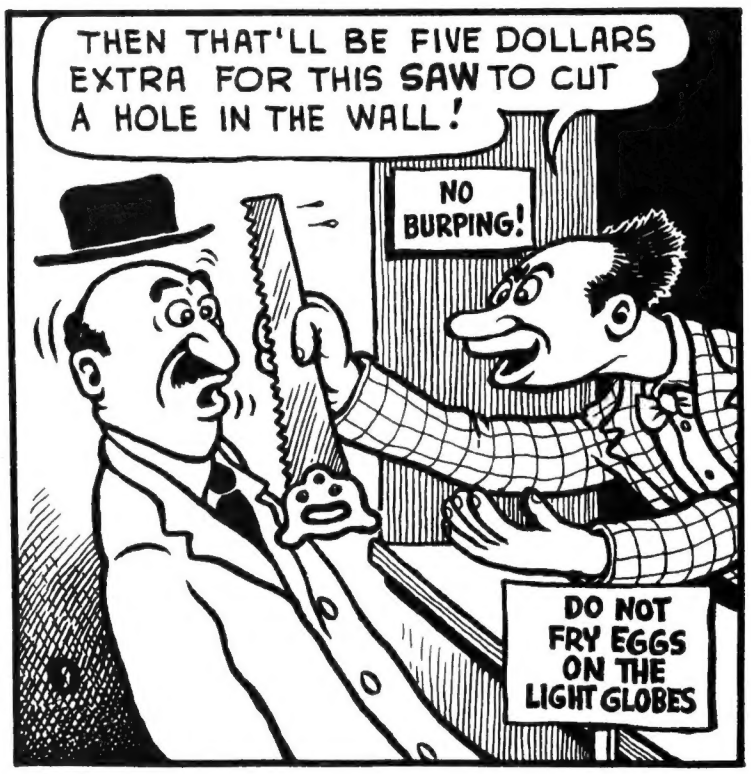
RECTAL MEAT THERMOMETER

LOOKS LIKE BILLY'S GOING TO BE A FEAST FOR SORE HEADS! REMEMBER—COMIC BOOKS ROT YOUR MIND AND UNDERGROUNDS DO IT FASTER AND BETTER! BYE BYE—AND BUY BONDS!

BERSERK BURK

the HOTEL CLERK IN "FURORE ON THE SECOND FLOOR"


NO SOCIAL CLIMBING
I WANT A ROOM WITH PLENTY OF LIGHT AND AIR!
YESSIR! HERE'S THE KEY TO 213-- THE ONLY ROOM LEFT IN THE HOTEL! YOU'LL FIND IT DELIGHTFULLY LIGHT AND AIRY -- IF YOU'LL USE THIS FLASHLIGHT AND TIRE PUMP!
WELCOME TO HUBBUB HOTEL "A ROBUST SNORE BEHIND EVERY DOOR"
by BASIL BEDBUG WOLVERTON
213
HEADS UP!
PIGEON HOLES BEHIND COUNTER
RATES 25 MILES PER HOUR THRU THE HALLS
SPECIAL ON RAT POISON! 100 POUNDS FOR A DOLLAR!
NO BRAWLS BETWEEN 1A.M. AND 1:15 A.M.
FIRE ESCAPE



LATER -- IN ROOM 213 ....

THE ONLY AVAILABLE ROOM IN TOWN, AND IT HAS TO BE LIKE THIS! WELL -- I'VE GOT TO HAVE FRESH AIR AND A GOOD VIEW!

SCREECH! SKEEP! SQUIZL!

YIPE!

CITY DUMP

AWFUL, ISN'T IT?

NO BODIES

THROW YOUR USED MONEY OUT HERE!

CLASH TRASH

IN THE NEXT ROOM ....

CLERK! SOMEONE'S SNORING AROUND HERE, AND IT'S DISTURBING MY HORSE!

I'LL LOOK INTO IT RIGHT AWAY! -- THE SNORING, I MEAN -- NOT THE HORSE!

BOY! CALL TWO-TOOTH BOOTH, THE HOTEL SLEUTH!

HH

DING!

NO TOOTH-PICKING AFTER 10 P.M.

YOU WANT ME?

YEAH! RUSH UP TO THE SECOND FLOOR, SEE WHO'S SNORING, AND TOSS THIS WATER THRU THE TRANSOM!

YOUR CHOICE OF SLEEPING PILLS, ETHER OR A MALLET!

FREE MAP OF WALLA WALLA

2

CAN'T DO IT! I'M BUSY WATCHING THE TENANT IN ROOM 110!

YOU MEAN THERE'S A SUSPICIOUS CHARACTER IN 110?

SUSPICIOUS? NAW! THAT BABE HASN'T THE SLIGHTEST IDEA I'VE BEEN WATCHIN' HER THRU THE KEYHOLE!

YOU'LL REST YOUR BEST IN OUR ANTI-PEST VEST!

HEY! I JUST DISCOVERED THERE'S NO FURNITURE IN ROOM 213! HOW DO YOU EXPECT ME TO SLEEP?

WITH YOUR EYES CLOSED. SORRY, BUT WE DON'T HAVE ANY FURNISHINGS FOR THAT ROOM!

USED RAZOR BLADES

HORSES NOT ALLOWED IN SHOWERS

THIS IS OUTRAGEOUS! I'LL GIVE YOU JUST TEN MINUTES TO DIG UP A BED FOR THAT ROOM, OR I'LL REPORT TO THE HUBBUB HOTELS OFFICE THAT YOU GAVE ME A DULL SAW!

YEAH? HOW'LL YOU CONTACT ANYONE AT THEIR OFFICES AT THIS HOUR?

VERY SIMPLE! I AM MATTRESS N. BEDSPRING, **PRESIDENT** OF THE HUBBUB HOTELS ASSOCIATION!

ULP!

TRANSOM PEEKING ONLY ON SATURDAYS

UH - NOW JUST MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE, MR. BEDSPRING! I'LL PERSONALLY GO FURNISH YOUR ROOM, MR. BEDSPRING! EVERYTHING WILL BE OKAY, MR. BEDSPRING!

THAT'S MORE LIKE IT!

STATE PEN

MEMOS
POLISH UPPERS FOR DAME IN 307

SWEEP POTATO CHIPS OUT OF BED IN 415

3

YOW! THERE'S NOT AN EXTRA BED IN THE PLACE, AND IF I DON'T DIG UP ONE FOR HIM, I'LL GET FIRED!

TAKE ME UP TO TWO!

DO NOT KICK PEOPLE IN THE ELEVATOR

STEP DOWN!

SECOND FLOOR! LADIES UNDERWEAR, RAZOR BLADES, PEANUT BRITTLE, FALSE TEETH, HORSE COLLARS, CHICKEN LIVERS, USED FLASH BULBS, CORN COBS AND—-

WAKE UP! YOU'RE WORKING AT A HUBBUB HOTEL NOW--NOT AT THAT DEPARTMENT STORE THAT FIRED YOU LAST WEEK!

MAYBE I CAN SNATCH A BED OUT FROM UNDER SOME HEAVY SLEEPER ON THIS FLOOR!

MR. BURK! I WANT TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING IN 205!

ZZZZZZ

211

WANTED: WOOD TO SAW

SEE? I MADE THE BED, BUT THE MATTRESS IS SO LUMPY THAT IT LOOKS TERRIBLE!

TRY POUNDING THE LUMPS BACK DOWN - LIKE ***THIS***!

WHUMP

SATURDAY EVENING (BED) POST

WHAT'S THE IDEA? SCRAM, AND LET ME SLEEP!!

ZIP!

COVER CHARGE 75¢

AFTER THIS, BE SURE YOU PEEK UNDER THE COVERS BEFORE YOU MAKE A BED!

TSK! TSK! THAT MEANS I'LL HAVE TO JOIN THE BED-PEEKERS UNION!

4

HEY! HE **DID** SAW A HOLE IN THE WALL!

213

PLEASE OPEN BEFORE ENTERING

DOOR JAM

CITY DUMP

JAM

WELL! I NEVER KNEW THE CITY DUMP WAS OUT HERE! AND ALL THE TIME I'VE BEEN EATING CHLOROPHYLL ON MY HOTCAKES BECAUSE I THOUGHT IT WAS ME!

LOST YOUR MARBLES? MAYBE THEY'RE HERE!

DUMP TRUCK

STOP AT HUBBUB HOTEL "WHERE YOU DON'T NEED MATH TO FIGURE A PATH TO THE NEAREST BATH"

A FELLOW JUST CAN'T WIN! I'VE A GOOD NOTION TO LOOP THIS FIRE ESCAPE ROPE AROUND MY NECK, AND JUMP OUT THE ~~

HEY! I'VE GOT AN IDEA!

IN THE LOBBY...

NO BEARS OR MARES ALLOWED ON THESE STAIRS!

HIS TEN MINUTES ARE ABOUT UP! I'LL GO BACK UP TO MY ROOM, AND IF THERE ISN'T A BED THERE, I'LL CANCEL HIS ELEVATOR PASS AND DEMOTE HIM TO ASSISTANT BEDSPRING WELDER!

USE THE STARES!

MASONS: DON'T WIPE YOUR TROWELS ON THE ROLLER TOWELS

MMMRAW-W-W!

LOBBY

?

201

NO SLICING

5

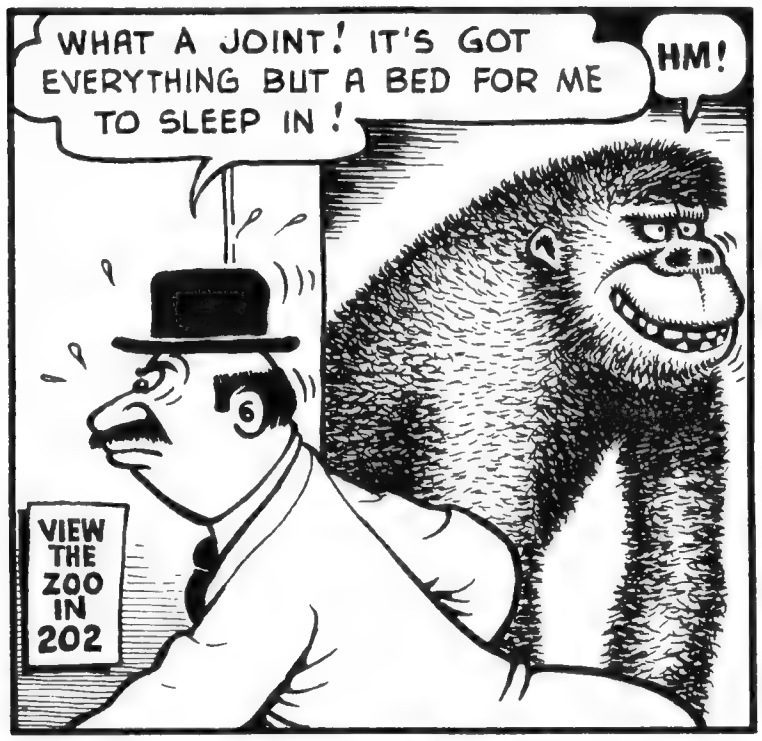
WHAT'S THIS COW DOING UP HERE?

WHADYA THINK? WHY SHOULD I RUN TO A GROCERY EVERY TIME I WANT SOME MILK?

QUIET

QUIET! YOU'RE DISTURBING MY DUCKS!
QUACK!
QUACK!
QUACK!

LOOKUM OUT, PALEFACE, OR YOU STEPPUM IN TRAP! LOTS BIG GAME IN THIS BIG TEEPEE, SO ME KEEPUM TRAPS SET EVERYWHERE!
CHAIN STORE SPECIAL


WHAT A JOINT! IT'S GOT EVERYTHING BUT A BED FOR ME TO SLEEP IN!
HM!
VIEW THE ZOO IN 202

AH! THERE YOU ARE, MR. BEDSPRING! YOUR ROOM IS ALL READY FOR YOU!
FINE! ALL I NEED IS A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP! I WAS PRETTY SURE YOU'D BE ABLE TO DIG UP A BED!
LAUNDRY SHOOT
FREE SHOTS AT YOUR OLD LAUNDRY

YEP! AND THERE IT IS!
?
6

LUCKY THING FOR YOU THE CITY DUMP IS NEXT DOOR, OR THERE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ANY PLACE TO DIG THE BED UP OUT OF!
HOTEL RULES
LOAM SWEET LOAM
THE END

problem. Mainly, some things are seriously wrong with our society and increasingly people are retreating into subjective fantasy worlds to escape confrontation. Comics are a significant input into the flood of entertainment that fills people's time. People are gradually losing contact with objective reality. Not only is the public fighting a losing battle with air, water and radiation pollution for their physical health, but they're being poisoned slowly but surely with *mind* pollution from the mass media. It's so far advanced now that we can speak of a tyranny of media over the people.

How about a new interpretation of the current craving for nostalgia among young people in the cities? They're finding no joy—only tension and frustration in their urban activities and so they form a desire to return to the Good Old Days of the '50s. So they retreat to their strongest impressions of their childhood which, I propose, were the indoctrination of tv, movies, comic books and the propaganda of grade school. But when one actually does get to re-see the old tv shows and reread the comics, it turns out that any sense of beauty, the least flicker of real human values was never being communicated. They were junk then and are junk today. Our desperate hunger now for true human values can't possibly be satisfied by any amount of that stuff. If those were the basic experiences of our generation, it's no wonder things are so scatterbrained today.

Obviously to many, we are coming to the end of a cycle in this culture. On the next go-round all the junk will hopefully be left behind. What will peopla say about comics ten years from now? That they were just another symptom of our era's loss of objective reality that led us into the Great Deterioration? To alter that future judgment we'll have to begin today to widen the scope and content of comics. If we don't plant new seeds now that can become the flowers of spring, there will be no flowers.

So what ground do we have in which to sow new seeds? The current scene in comics looks kinda bleak, folks. The pro comics on both coasts will doubtlessly be crushed in whatever halt the economy finally grinds to, tied as they are to the heart of America's hyper-metabolism on Manhattan Island. The undergrounds now know the full burden of a public eye seeing all undergrounds as crude and anarchic, not to mention new local obscenity laws that intimidate retail outlets. The limited edition fanzine press was left weak when much of its talent and energy was drained off into big time comics.

But comics are not bad or immoral, no. They are another process of the mind like painting or sculpture, with good and bad aspects. The potential of comics is that it is the ideal contemporary vehicle for creating subjective fantasy. You can state a fantasy world more strongly, to more people, with less effort, than in any other media. The good aspect for this potential is that far-reaching visions of the world as it could be can be communicated easily to many minds. The bad aspect is that comics can be used as further propaganda to perpetuate the peculiar and very intense fantasy this society uses to sustain itself. We have one person who is at least working with the first potential—George Metzger. And we have at least one whole professional company working with the other—Marvel.

I don't see how we can plant new seeds in either the pro or underground structures. How can comics go underground and break through with a real alternative like *Mad* did in the '50s when today the whole place is mad? We need a plan for the future. Anyone out there got one? I suppose I should offer mine. . . .

I think comics can go underground again, in the limited edition press. Though weak now, they have the greatest potential for growth and for being the growers of the seeds. Right now we're only talking of a handful of magazines: *Wonderworld*, *Graphic Story Quarterly*, *Funnyworld*, *Promethean* and *Graphic Story Magazine*. But look at the two sides they show at once. They remain the middle of the road of the three outlets, neither pretentiously commercial-professional or pretentiously crude-berserk. And as they are sold primarily through the mails to a specialized but interested audience, they get over the obstacles of mass circulation publications, the *Post/Look/Life* deadend. This enables them to present the most daring and innovative work being done. Expansion of the limited edition press into more capital and variety of content will likely be very slow, now and into the near future, but if they can encourage creators to think in new ways by publishing them, the press can act as the guardians of the seeds. Personally I would love to add my energies to any such projects. And if there are more plans to save comics from dying out completely, let's hear 'em.

Andrew D. Smith
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

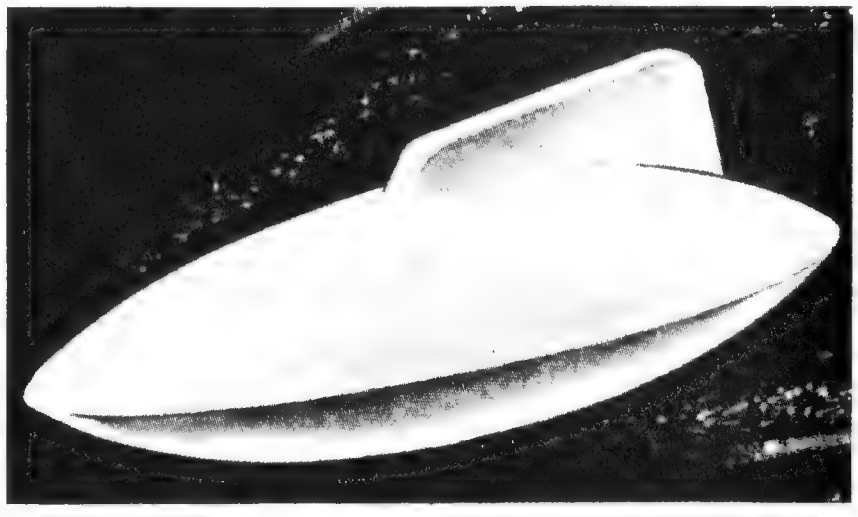
GSM No. 15 arrived earlier this week, and I was never so disappointed in my life. Granted, after issue No. 10 you have gone downhill, but this was the limit. What has happened to *GSM*? The first issue I bought was No. 8 and I've gotten ahold of all the other back issues except No. 1, and I can honestly say No. 8 was your best effort. You seemed to be building up to something with Nos.' 6 and 7, an excellent crescendo with No. 8, No. 9 was very good, and so was No. 10. Then you started your ideas of specials and these interviews. To be perfectly honest, No. 11 was terrible—I found it unreadable. No. 12, the first part of the Basil Wolverton special was equally as boring. Mr. Wolverton is very talented—I know and respect that—but his art is so stylized and so stiff and overdone in technique that I don't want to read it. The same can be said of No. 14 also, although I did enjoy his illustrations from the Biblical sequence. Even issue No. 13 was bad. Reprinting the Adam Link thing was regrettable. It was mediocre when it was first published and reached lower levels of mediocrity the second time around. Even "Malig" by talented George Metzger did not strike me. Bits and pieces of it had appeared elsewhere, and it seems George just decided to throw them all together for publication here.

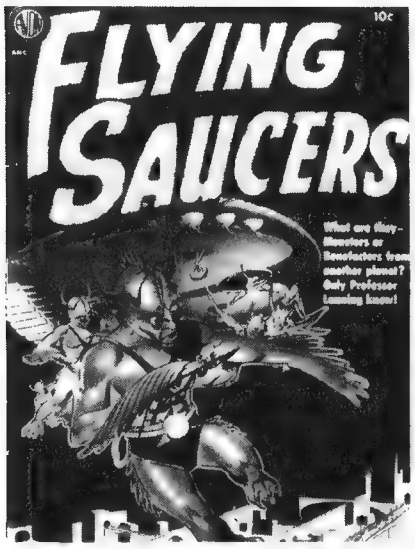
And now No. 15. A dollar for two interviews? Bill, you must be going crazy! That's the kind of muck a crudzine throws at us; and you must be the first one in fandom's history to publish crud in some of the finest lithography, color covers too, and have the nerve to charge a dollar.

From the way I've been writing this you must think I'm violently angry. Well, I'm not. I am just so amazed at how you could pull this kind of trick on your readers. For a while I was convinced the purpose of publishing *GSM* was to have unique new interpretations of how the medium of the graphic story could be used to attract a very intelligent adult readership. Perhaps to the point of influencing the comics industry. A noble attempt, and I like to think you partially succeeded. You presented us with fantastic pieces of art. Three marvelous stories from Metzger; the magnificent "At Sea"; Mike Barrier's cartooned piece; and the marvelous work of Vaughn Bode. All vastly unique in concept and interpretation. You took the first step through the door you seemed to be determined to open, and then let it slam right back in your face.

My point is, I really don't understand why you bothered to publish this issue. After five apparent strike-outs in a row, I hardly feel up to trusting you with a subscription. So I'm enclosing a dollar for the next issue, with the hope it will include a few "promised" stories by the likes of Alex Toth ("The Fox") and George Metzger. After that, Bill, it's up to you. If No. 16 is as regrettable as No. 15, I'm afraid you lose me. No nastiness intended.

Thanks. I needed that.





Howard Waldrop
Grand Prairie, Texas

Reading the Gahan Wilson interview was very illuminating. I imagine being Gahan Wilson is a little like living in a wind tunnel which blows in from outer space with a detour through skid row and a garbage dump. It must be very interesting for him to close his eyes and see what goes on on the back of his eyelids. It's probably very icky.

Harrison talked about one of the basic things we seem to forget about the comics. Comics usually aren't the one-man, auteur-type media of the Eisners, Barks and Coles we would like it to be, or to have been. It's twelve guys sitting in a room like Harrison described, turning out a whole book in a day and a half. That's probably what the comics were all about in the '40s and '50s. It's things like that which tell those of us who were just growing up then what it was like to work on those comics which we only saw as the end product. We never knew when we were reading some of those that maybe the artists worked seventeen straight hours and got $30 apiece for what we were reading.

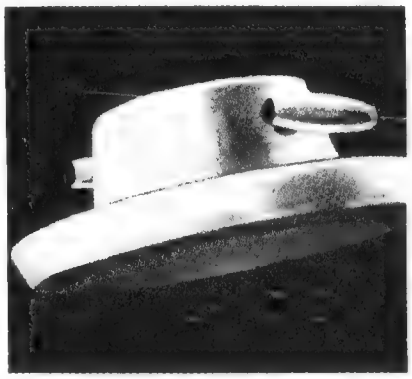
Not only that, through Harrison's example we find what devious ways people come to the job of writing, or the art or whatever. Here's a guy who did everything from letter for $2.50 a page to put out that ungodly *Grapevine* now one of the better known sf writers in the world. It's a very strange world we live in, Master Jack.

Like Lou Cameron. From what I've heard, he was an army officer, retired in the '50s, did that marvelous work on *The Time Machine,* all those tremendous things tucked away in the most unlikely places, then drifts away. He's now writing thrillers and science fiction and all his comic work is at least twenty years in his past.

When we were young, and reading it, I didn't think we ever thought of the people, the personalities behind the comics we read. We read them for the story, for the adventure, for the art. We forgot (if we ever knew) that people put these things out. I mean, we thought those comics all drew themselves, and the stories just appeared somewhere.

Now we seem to be entering an area of personality, of concern with how the medium came to be. I know I'm possibly more interested in how people did an unusually fine story than the story itself. Especially if it contains something new, or a new use of an old idea. Through your interviews in past *GSMs* with Toth, Wolverton, Severin and now this issue's with Wilson and Harrison, we're learning about those people who have been entertaining us for a long while.

There are people who say *GSM* has gotten away from the graphic story. I say tough beans. You've struck a balance between the written word and the graphic story which suits me fine.



Landon Chesney
Chattanooga, Tennessee

Harry Harrison was properly caustic, and objective, and didn't seem to be overly concerned about exactly whom or what he was addressing. I think the uncertainty about "fandom," and what kind of image one is supposed to present to same, is what hurts a lot of interviews—or is at least the basis of what I find at fault with those I don't like. Wolverton, for instance, whom I admire greatly, and who I know must take his work very seriously, tried too hard for the one-liner—the boffo gag man, as it were. Maybe the stuff was funny when he said it aloud, I dunno, but it was pretty stale in print.

Then we have Gahan Wilson, whose stuff is not exactly my cup of tea, but his interview was excellent. His humorous asides were genuinely humorous, and also very much to the point. Oddly enough I was expecting to be disappointed. I heard him speak at a Vanderbilt symposium, and he didn't come across quite as well there as he does in print here.

Robert E. Butts
Tucson, Arizona

GSM No. 15 finally arrived. You publish the damn thing so infrequently I cannot even remember whether it's late. There's a message in there somewhere. Furthermore, no matter how many pages, each issue is always too thin.

Gahan Wilson is bad for my sanity. It is most disquieting to think too long or too hard about his work; not all of it, but some of it. His monsters are amusing and eminently forgettable, but when he bares the sickness within, the ugly side we all have in some measure, it is not at all funny. The "fellow who's in all the papers" is the killer of Kitty Genovese; the onlookers are the forty people who saw the murder and didn't want to get involved. For my money it is Wilson's ability to focus so unerringly on man as ghoul that is the mark of his genius. There are not a few times when his insight is so profound I wish he didn't have it. Almost.

No doubt you'll receive both corroborative and rebuttal evidence that comics today are no different from comics two decades ago when Harry Harrison was involved in them. Certainly it is true that the product quality has not improved, only attenuated at the extremes. We've lost the very good and the very bad, and that is all.

Perhaps that characterizes the entire industry. Fewer hacks and fewer talents; a little less gore and a little more insight; a little less concern for sales and a little more attention to a good product; a little less willingness to be hacks and a little more pride in the work.

Even so, Harrison's assessment of the industry still obtains: it is basic, simple stuff for basic, simple people. Given the sum total output of every publishing house to date, any belief within the industry that comic books are an art form is ludicrously pretentious. Fans, because they are fans, can be forgiven their excesses.

Any legitimate interest in the value of the medium should manifest itself in at least the following ways:

1. "Good" comics of unimpeachable quality whose sales, if necessary, are underwritten by the blood-and-guts action line.

2. Industry-financed academic inquiry into the medium and its effects. Example: editors occasionally run tributes from mothers to the effect that little Johnny reads well and seems smarter than his schoolmates; he also reads comics and maybe there's a connection. This should be verified scientifically with empirical evidence that will stand rigid scrutiny.

3. Illustrated classics in more than name alone. There are many public domain properties that literally scream for adaptation: Kipling, Poe, Irving, Dumas, Tolstoi and many, many more. If the graphic story is a legitimate art form, the most brilliant author's work can be enhanced by adaptation. And if the industry believes it, its talents ought to be trying. To be done properly, such an adaptation would take many hundred pages, nearly as many years, and probably be unmarketable. If done properly, it would be worth it for its own sake.

Joe Brancatelli
New York, New York

I took home *GSM* No. 15 and read the Gahan Wilson interview and enjoyed it immensely. It was engrossing, something you rarely get from a by-mail interview. Dick Voll also seems to have the ability to elicit substantive answers from offbeat questions.

I found myself mostly in agreement with Wilson, with the exception of one point: his comments concerning Charles Addams. As a great fan of Addams (doesn't seem enough fans of magazine cartoonists in the fandom saturated with comic books) I too share his dislike of Addams' looser, sloppier style. However, as I found out in a recent conversation with Addams, it's not due to any lack of effort on his part. He's just getting too old for his tight style, something he readily admits. In my talk with him he was particularly disgusted with his most recent *New Yorker* cover. But, at his age, we're lucky to get anything out of him at all.

(Referring now to correspondence dealing with an article in Inside Comix:)

The question of who really invented the black and white comic market is a fuzzy one. Perhaps I should have dwelt more on the fact that the EC Picto-Fictions weren't true comic magazines. The impetus was there, however, and I think Warren got his inspiration from them. And as far as *Mad* goes, technically, it might be the first black and white magazine, but I never hear *Mad* called a comic book. *Mad Magazine*, yes, but *Mad Comic Book*, never. It's transcended that level, in the eyes of the general public, many years ago. My point in *Inside Comix* was that Warren was the guy to commit the time and money to make the format go. Granted, Charles Biro did the first adult comic with *Tops* in 1949 (in color), but again I point to Warren's committment in the black and white field.

This whole argument parallels the squabble about who first invented the one-line captioned cartoon. *New Yorker* says Peter Arno invented it. Arno denies it, and most everyone else says no one can be sure. But the thing that is clear is that Arno made the one-line caption go, thus replacing the wordy he/she cartoons that populated *Judge* and the old *Life*.

Concerning undergrounds, I think the situation in Los Angeles is quite different than the rest of the country. L.A. and San Francisco, being the home for most undergrounds, had pre-arranged outlets in the head shops. They were always pretty easily purchasable in California from the start.

In New York City and the rest of the country, undergrounds were never so easily accessible. Most of the country didn't have head shops "risque" enough to carry the items. In the City, head shops didn't ever get past Greenwich Village in Manhattan and never into the outlying buroughs. Up until 1970 or so it was virtually impossible to find undergrounds in this city.

Now, however, regular newspaper and magazine distributors are handling undergrounds. Many places, especially newsstands and candy stores which account for about 70% of comic book sales in New York, now display undergrounds and Marvel/DC/Charlton comics side by side. Most times they come from the same distributor who brings them their National comics.

In shopping center stores (which are just beginning to be a force here) undergrounds have replaced comic books. There, right next to the *Times*, *Playboy*, *Newsweek* and all the rest, are undergrounds. No overground comic books. As I'm sure you know, supermarkets and drug stores don't carry over or undergrounds here.

This New York City trend has also been extending to other parts of the country. Leonard Darvin told me that's their main concern now, although he now feels it's lessened since the Supreme Court decision, since underground publishers have had a paranoia fit.

Mark Evanier
Los Angeles, California

If you must know, "Wishing World" came about thusly: I was sitting around one evening monopolizing the conversation with the amply-artistic John Pound. We're a good combo: John never talks and I never stop. Only when either of us sneezes is there a lull.

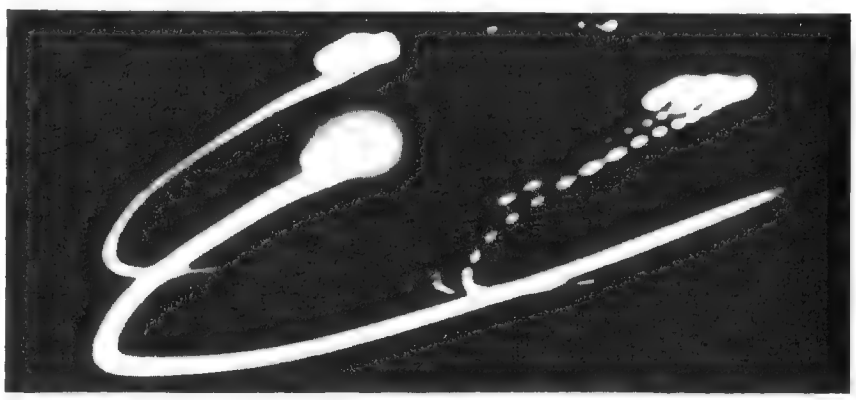
Our topic was the recent inundation of EC memorabilia in the form of reprints and conventions —the massive resurrection and deification of one of the better ages of comics. While I was sneezing, John got in a few words about how today's EC nostalgists are adept at ignoring the relentless cliches that saddled their science fiction titles. Bill Gaines has said time and again that the sf books lost money; that they were continued because he and writer Al Feldstein enjoyed producing them. That fervor shows in the EC books, especially when compared to today's comics and their persistent crusade to offer an absolute minimum of plot and drawing per page. When I sneezed again, John had an opening to suggest that we collaborate on a parody of the EC sf stories and, in particular, of the New Wave EC fan that is smitten with the Wonder of It All. If I'd taken a Contac tablet earlier that evening, "Wishing World" might never have been written.

We decided to ridicule as many of the Wood/Williamson stereotypes as possible in the space allotted and, especially, to pay attention to Al Feldstein's script. In fandom's rush to canonize the EC artists, the writers (usually Feldstein) have been largely ignored. Despite what Harry Harrison may say, Feldstein was one of the best writers ever in the field and he has only received due accolade, in the midst of this rediscovery of EC, in Frank Jacobs' tribute-biography of William Gaines. It's unfortunate, however, that *The Mad World of William M. Gaines*, though a most pleasing book, had to perpetuate some of the omnipresent myths of EC fandom. I refuse to believe that "Each day a complete script had to be written (by Feldstein) and gotten ready for one of the freelance artists." Feldstein was not the only writer and, even if he had been, at his peak he was only responsible for seven bi-monthlies. Four stories per book equals fourteen scripts per month, minus whatever Johnny Craig and the later writers contributed. This is not to suggest that Feldstein was neither a hard worker nor a good author. He was both, obviously, but the "story a day" legend makes no sense, mathematically.

While on the subject of Jacobs' book, it's implied that Feldstein got the *Mad* editorship, after Kurtzman's departure, on the strength of his scripts for *Panic*. However, Jack Mendelsohn has said he authored most of the scripts in *Panic*. Mendelsohn, probably best known for his unique primitive comic strip *Jackie's Diary*, also wrote a devastating and hilarious lampoon of Gaines and the horror comic business for one of the better *Mad* imitations of the '50s, *Lunatickle*. Lee Elias illustrated.

One last addendum to the Jacobs book: Chapter Seven tells of a day when police raided Bill Gaines' office and arrested business manager Lyle Stuart for selling "disgusting literature." Jacobs does not mention why Stuart, and not Gaines, was taken into custody: Because Stuart, now one of the country's more irreverent publishers (of such as the Gaines book) had been publishing a scandal-sheet tabloid attacking, among other sacred cows, the all-powerful Broadway columnist Walter Winchell. Though Winchell's influence was then decreasing he and the New York police were still, as the Winchell slanguage phrased it, "ascloseasthis." A few months later the offending "disgusting" EC book, *Panic*, cover-featured a spoof of scandal mags with a photo of Winchell and the logo "Does Walter Winchell Read Comics?"

But I'm wandering from my two main topics: that "Wishing World" is to be dedicated to Al Feldstein, and that you are to be saluted on this, the tenth anniversary of one of fandom's first —still just about the best—pillars of incisive journalism and experimental graphic fiction. When do John and I get paid?



Hames Ware
New Orleans, Louisiana

In-depth interviews are about the most satisfying and interesting reading formats for the historically inclined reader, and as one I am convinced *GSM* is serving a high purpose in providing a forum for this type of reporting. One place Harry Harrison gets no argument from me is in his admiration of Henry Sharp's work. It's a shame Sharp didn't work very long in the comics. Like Lou Cameron he could've done much to breathe life into the art in comics when they needed it most. Cameron's thoughts about comics pretty much coincide with Harrison's; they don't offer the typically patronizing look-back we all feel comfortable with. In fact it's really tough to find any veteran of the comics who is high on them.

Documenting comic book history is exciting because most of the pioneers are still ready, willing and able to talk about the comic book and their part in it, though since my last letter the number of deaths is frightening: Charles Biro, Lou Fine, Syd Shores, Bill Everett among them—and Pete Costanza, sidelined by a heart attack.

I just wish more books like Jacobs' and interviews like Harrison's were seeing print so that we can get a more complete picture. As for EC, the impressions Jack Kamen and Graham Ingels could offer might differ from any others, and I for one will never feel the EC story can be complete without both men's collective accounts.

But what of the pioneer companies and creators? Some good prospects come to mind: Whitney Ellsworth and Vince Sullivan, two of the original comic book pioneer editors. Or Mrs. Lloyd Jacquet and Sam Iger, two early shop owners.

And what of the woman's point of view? Publisher Rae Herman, Tarpe Mills, Cecelia Munson, Claire Moe and other women cartoonists of the early days, often hiding behind initials or masculine pseudonyms forced on them by sales-minded bosses. Writers, many editors and more cartoonists than anyone might first guess were women; it's time to document their many contributions.

Even with all the Black History buffs not one single interview has taken place with one of the black artists of the early days. And there were several: Matt Baker, one of the most interesting artists in the history of comics. E. C. Stoner, Al Hollingsworth, Tom Feelings, Owen Middleton and Andre LeBlanc are some that come to mind. Baker and Stoner sadly are dead, but at least two of the others are now well known painters and teachers.

The first original art comic book was Dell's *The Funnies* in 1929 and though it wasn't followed by another until Wheeler-Nicholson's *New Fun* in 1935, and Cook-Mahon's pre-Centaur titles in 1936, I feel all contributors in these years rightfully can be considered pioneers. In 1929 Joe Archibald, Frank Engli and Tack Knight were among the cartoonists represented. Scanning the 1935 credits I note two men who are still at it—Sheldon Mayer and Creig Flessel, both of whom answered our data sheets for the *Who's Who*, as did Rafael Astarita, Adolphe Barreaux, Matt Curzon, Whit Ellsworth from 1935 and Gill Fox, Charles Biro, Dick Briefer, Vern Henkel and Bob Kane from 1936.

These men and all others found among the comics credits of 1929 and 1935-40 are the true pioneers of their field, and I only hope others who share the sense of history Jerry Bails, Jim Steranko, Ron Goulart, Jerry De Fuccio, Richard and you have will seek out interviews.

The only thing richer for the *Who's Who* is history. My reward for many years research was ten free copies, dispensed to libraries and relatives the next day. Jerry's was a staggering expenditure and an even larger one looming ahead for Volumes 2 and 3, but both of us understood this from the beginning.

Jerry's real reward came in successfully producing an excellent professional job typing up every single entry and riding herd over mountains of data and somehow putting it all together. I know of no other person willing or able to do what Jerry managed to do.

My real reward came in the two reviews I've so far seen: one in a library journal recognizing the historical value of comics and seeing the *Who's Who* as a worthwhile biographical reference; the other by Howard Siegel who chose the dedicatory tribute to Wendell Crowley as setting the standard for the whole book.

Without Wendell there would've been no *Who's Who*. He gave the encouragement necessary to take the ledgers of names and credits and put them into print. We had wanted to surprise him with our tribute to him but the seriousness of the operation he faced made me decide to tell him in advance our book would be dedicated to him. And so, though he didn't live to see the dedication, he knew of it. It was a dedication composed with deepest respect and gratitude, and it made me very happy to see a reviewer use that dedication as a touchstone for his review of the book.

Jerry located and got data forms from E.E. Hibbard, Harry Fisk (age 86), Martin Filchock, Leonard Frank, and a number of others. Wayne Boring disclosed he had moonlighted at Novelty Press under the pseudonym "Jack Harmon." Thanks to you we learned via Dan Noonan that George Kerr drew "Raggedy Ann" for the comic books (in his 80s at the end). Mike Barrier considers Kerr's work important enough to print an article on his career in an upcoming *Funnyworld*. Ron Goulart discovered Wood Cowan alive and well. Jim Steranko found Harry Chesler likewise. Chesler in turn said Victor Fox was still alive; three men all of us had assumed deceased.

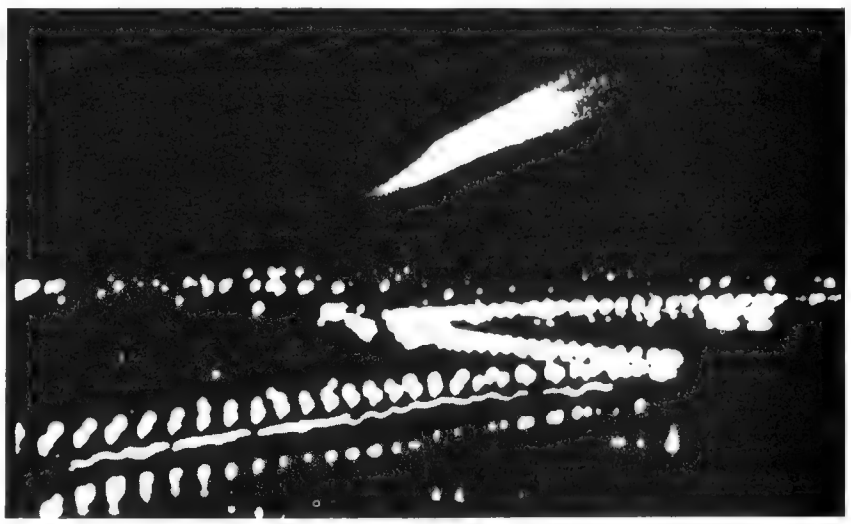
Jerry Bails and I would like to locate and get data forms for every person we're missing, naturally, but high on the list are: Ernie Schroeder, Harry Anderson, John Spranger, Cecelia Munson, Bob Fujitani, E.H. Hart, David Heames, Fred Kida, Alex Kostuk, Charles Paris, Harry Sahle, Carl Pfeufer, Gustav Schrotter, Ed Dobrodka, John Stanley, Jimmy Thompson, Bud Thompson, Dan Zolnerowich, Jack Kamen, Graham Ingels, and finally the artist we'd most like to locate, Emil Gershwin.

Many mysteries have been solved by your readers and others since my last letter asking for help. But still unsolved: who was "Bing" who did "Andy Panda" in a style similar to Kerr's, and the excellent unsigned *Fairy Tale Parade* artist who drew in a jagged style that resembled no other's. Jim Steranko is tracking down the "Black Dwarf" artist whose work rivaled Ken Battefield's for eccentricity. H.C. Kiefer, another eccentric, is deceased as is Battefield.

Does anyone know who drew *Buffalo Bill Jr.*, *Drumbeat* and *The Big Country* for Dell? Who drew *Francis The Talking Mule* at Dell, and who was "R. T." on those "Chuckwagon Charley" fillers? The *Buffalo Bill Jr.* Dells have a certain amount of Kinstler influence, and while on the subject so did the work of an artist we know absolutely nothing about, Bob McCarty. He was a part of the Simon & Kirby shop at Prize, did some interesting horror stuff for Fawcett and wound up doing Westerns, war and horror for Marvel, sometimes signing "McCarty" sometimes "McCarthy" which, along with the fact that no one seems to know him, may mean it was a pseudonym.

Several oldtimers would like to pin a name on the artist who drew "Kinks Mason" in *Fight Comics* under the shop byline "Steve Broder." And I'd like to put a name to the signed initials "F. M." on "Flying Fist" at Prize in 1944, whose drawn characters literally floated, their feet never touching ground—a truly incredible style.

Anyone with leads or other data please write to Jerry Bails, 487 Lakewood Blvd., Detroit, Michigan 48215.



Nostrand BY Nostrand

Born on Monday (full of grace... or is it face?) May 13th, 1929 in Hoboken, New Jersey. We didn't *live* in Hoboken, I just happened to be born there. In 1932 the family moved to Hempstead, Long Island where I grew from a precocious youth into a splendid example of manhood. After graduating from Hempstead high school in 1946 I worked with my father for about a year. Pop was in the antique business. Sort of. He restored paintings, made furniture, painted toll ware trays, made clock-glasses (look it up), did striping, scroll-work, gold leafing, painted sheraton fancies, hitchcock chairs, painted portraits, landscapes, seascapes, still lifes, ships, birds, animals, walls and privies.

I was employed doing striping, gold leafing, scroll-work, etc. After a year of this it was decided I didn't want to go to college. I applied to Pratt Institute and was rejected. (Screw them.) I ended up at an outfit called The Art Career School, an establishment dedicated to separating the returning GI from his education allowance. In this it was very successful, although it didn't teach very much of anything. I left after one semester.

Back to gold leafing, striping, etc., for about a month. Then one of Pop's friends said he had a friend who was a cartoonist who needed an inker. "Look no further," quoth my old man, who was no mean shakes at turning a snappy phrase. And so a week or so later, some smudgy samples clutched to my skinny chest, I met S. R. Powell, boy cartoonist.

When I first started with Powell his work was more linear than light and shade. When I started inking for him I tried to get more of a light and shadow effect in what we were doing. The change in Powell's work was so gradual that nobody ever realized it. The only way you could tell would be to compare one of the Shadows or Doc Savages done in 1948 to some of the stuff turned out in early 1952.

I don't know what features Powell worked on originally for Harvey. Powell got out of the Air Force in '45. If I remember correctly WINGS COMICS was very popular then, and Bob did a thing called "Chickie Ricks" for Harvey. Chickie Ricks was a comic type aviator. It seems I recall a character from WINGS called "The Flyin' Fool." I may be mistaken on the name but I'm pretty sure about the character. Anyway, this Chickie Ricks was originally called "Chickie Ricks, the Flying Fool." I don't know if there was any litigation or not, but I think "The Flying Fool" part was dropped out of the title after a while. Powell was still doing "Chickie Ricks" when I started working for him in 1948.

There were three of us working for Powell when I started with him; at one point he had five assistants, but his best work was done when he had the original three. They were George Siefringer, who did backgrounds; Martin Epp, who inked, lettered and helped George on backgrounds. I started out inking and then got into doing backgrounds (when George was too hung over or just AWOL) and then pencilling.

The way the drill went was as follows: Powell would pencil the story; it would then be sent to the publisher to be lettered, have the borders inked in and have any changes the art director deemed necessary. When we got it back Bob would ink in the faces, I would ink in the figures and George and Marty would do the backgrounds. If the story was particularly heavy as far as backgrounds were concerned, and I finished inking the figures first, I would then help out on backgrounds. Marty generally took care of the cleaning up, erasing and whiting out mistakes and brushstrokes that went over borders. Powell would then give it a final onceover and it would then be mailed to the client.

When we were doing "The Shadow" an extra step was inserted: when he became "invisible" he was inked in on a vellum overlay that was then printed in light blue on the final product.

There was a radio show at the time called "Straight Arrow" that Magazine Enterprises was trying to convert to the printed page via the comic book. We turned out some pretty jazzy looking samples to try to get this, but were undone by some artist whose work was not up to ours. This is not a lack of modesty on my part; we were turning out some good work for those times. We suspected some kind of nepotism or at least some flummery with the program's sponsor. But all was not lost. We ended up doing a feature in STRAIGHT ARROW called "Red Hawk," a kind of junior edition "Straight Arrow." That was the one where we learned to hate writers. Some clown would write: "Panel 4 - Show the entire Sioux nation charging down the hill on the helpless Sac and Fox nation." Took him a fast fourteen seconds to write, and he's back to his flask of Johnny Walker's Red Label. "Now all we got to do is *draw* this mother."

We must have done OK because we got another feature to do for them, "Bobby Benson and the B Bar B Riders." This was one of the early kids television westerns, probably sponsored by the same folks who had "Straight Arrow." All tv was live in those days and Bob appeared on the show once as "The artist who draws that wonderful comic book, fellows and gals!"

We were working for Fawcett publications in there somewhere, too. In 1950 or '51 we did a book called HOT ROD COMICS, written by a couple of car nuts named Jay Goude and Steve Lansing.

There was a lot of technical type drawing done in this feature; after all, when you open the hood on a channeled '32 "B" Roadster that's supposed to have a Ford 59A block with Edelbrock heads and a three-carburetor manifold, you can't draw in a wound-up rubber band. Since I had been fooling with cars since I owned my first Model T, I was the car expert in the studio. I used to go out of my gourd drawing those finned aluminum cylinder heads with 16 acorn nuts holding them down; not to mention putting in all the wiring, throttle linkages, shock absorbers, dropped axels and whatall. In short, I *had* to be a goddam expert. And the background man couldn't help either; he couldn't tell a gear shift knob from a flat tire. Neither could Powell. He would pencil the story up to a point and then hand the thing over to me. I did all the cars. We had a pretty good following with that magazine, and if there was a technical error in it we'd hear about it. George, the background man, would draw the inside of a garage and have some of the damnedest stuff hanging on the walls; it was what a person who didn't know anything about tools or machinery *thought* it should look like. The lazy bugger would never use any reference material, he'd just fake it.

We also did a couple of westerns for Fawcett. They would get an old movie script and convert it into comic book prose and we'd illustrate it. I remember doing "Lash LaRue," for God's sake. And we did "The Red Badge of Courage" for them, with genuine portraits of Audie Murphy and Bill Mauldin interspersed amongst the minnie balls.

While all this was going on things were not necessarily dead with the other publishers. We did a thing for the Harveys called BABE RUTH COMICS. It started out as a biography thing and ended up as sort of swill for the kids to show the benefits of clean living. The Babe Ruth Foundation went along with it, as did Mrs. George Herman Ruth. Along about this time the Harveys discovered love comics. Also horror comics and, thank God for Korea, war comics.

While we were doing things for Fawcett, their big cheese art director--a homuncle named Will Lieberson--collaborated with another person of equal stature to write and produce a

play for Broadway. The name of this turkey was "Springtime Folly." It had to do with a firm that made maternity clothes. "Our motto: We make dresses for swell women." That will give you an idea of the type of humor employed in this offering. Lieberson had a great way to get backing for his show. "Wouldn't you like to put some money in a play I've written?" he would query, holding a 52 page comic book script in one hand and a stilletto in the other. Powell put up a hundred and Marty, George and myself put up fifty each.

Brooks Atkinson claimed "Springtime Folly" would be folly in *any* season. After papering the house for three nights the thing mercifully closed amidst the moans of artists, editors, writers and relatives who had sicced this atrocity on an unsuspecting public.

In March of 1952 I left Bob Powell, who had by then moved to a house he built in Laurel Hollow, Long Island. I had wanted to leave Bob prior to March but he said he wanted time to find someone to replace me. He didn't seem to make any effort to get anyone so after a couple of months I finally left. I saw Sid Jacobson, an editor at Harvey, with whom we had worked. There was some hesitancy on his part about giving me work. Not because he was afraid I couldn't handle it -- he didn't want to offend Powell. Bob and Al Harvey had known each other for a good long time and Sid had only worked for Harvey for a comparatively short while. Sid called Powell and asked if it would be all right if I worked for the Harveys. Bob said it was all right with him as long as I didn't get the same rate per page that he did. If this sounds strange to you, it did to me too. He just couldn't allow someone he regarded as an ex-employee being elevated to the same level as himself. There was only $2.50 difference per page, but it was enough to suit him. I suppose his ego couldn't take my being his equal. The man must have had an inferiority complex second to none. I certainly wasn't going to take any bread out of *his* mouth. What the hell, Harvey had other artists working for him besides Powell. The whole thing was dumb, but nevertheless, as long as I worked for Harvey, I never got the same page rate as Powell.

I'm not sure, but I think the first job I did for Harvey was a story called "Man Germ," written by a fellow named Nat Barnett who has since dropped from view as far as I know. It had the same premise as a film of recent vintage about a trip through the interior of a person's body. Turns out this fellow was a germ, though, and the body expires. Cute.

I did a little story editing of my own here and there. Harvey Kurtzman had a way of writing suspense using maybe three or four panels all in a row with the same background or the same figure like stop photography. He could build a situation up to unbearable tension and then really bash you with some kind of climax. I tried to inject this device into some of my work. Most of the scripts I worked from were pretty shoddy and there really wasn't too much opportunity to do anything creative. The writers didn't think pictorially. Kurtzman wrote for the artist, if he wrote the stuff; if he didn't write it, he certainly mashed it into a shape where it was suitable for illustration. Working for him must have been a pleasure. On the other hand, Al Feldstein was a poop. I always thought "the less copy the better" as far as a comic book story was concerned.

I guess it was in 1953 that the 3D comic thing was. I know there was all sorts of howling and shrieking among publishers about who owned the rights to it. But it was all rather academic because the whole fad only lasted about two issues. Bob Powell and I did the first Harvey book. I did a story called "Pony Express" and another about some fellow with an airplane who was a crop duster. While all this 3D hoohah was going on, the Harveys got some advertising stuff for the back of cereal boxes. "Howdy Doody" no less. Can you imagine the family at the breakfast table with their red and green glasses on? Harvey got into a bind and I helped out on that project.

When 3D comics came out, the first issue produced by Harvey sold out almost immediately. We were directly launched into rapping out another post haste. They took on extra hands in the art department. They were converting some of the old stuff into 3D comics, a time consuming proposition. Then...TA-DAH! ...Leon cornered the market in 3D glasses. It cost a bundle, but Leon had them. *All* of them. Nobody else could produce 3D comics 'cause Leon had all the glasses. The second 3D issue didn't sell quite so rapidly as the first. The people had seen what 3D comics looked like with the first issue. Work was halted on a third. And Leon had all those glasses. He still has them.

About the only good thing that happened with 3D was a page rate increase; they paid us double because of the extra work. We were working on cels, like doing work for Disney or something. There were generally two acetate cels plus the background, which was done on Craftint board. After inking on the acetates they had to be whited out on the back so you couldn't see through the figures and whatnot. The engravers took two shots -- one with the cels shifted, the foreground shifted to the left a little more than the middleground cel. The background stayed put. The other shot was done with the cels *not* shifted. One was then printed in red, the other in green, When you put on the red and green glasses you got an illusion of being able to see around the figures. It was a little fakey because everything seemed to be set in three planes. Leon got together with somebody or other and they worked out some gimmick so that the art seemed to project out of the page towards you instead of just remaining in planes. It all went for naught, though. After two issues the whole thing was dead. I have a feeling the Harveys really took a bath on that episode. If they had been the only ones to come out with 3D they probably would have made out, but it seems to me there were three different publishers, all with their own version. When you add to this the fact that the mag cost 25¢ instead of a dime and you had to wear those trick glasses to read it, it just had too much against it.

The thing that motivates most publishers as well as any other businessman is greed. In the main they showed the same kind of thinking that was typical of the movie makers in Hollywood. The talent that produced the actual art they published was treated with something less than contempt. Artists and writers were not human beings. They were untrustworthy, drunks, ne'er - do - wells; they were there to be exploited. They were not social equals, they were serfs, chattels, and were treated as such.

And much in the same way that Hollywood killed itself off, so did the comic book business. If you can sell one war comic you can sell five, and if you can sell five you can sell a hundred. The same went for horror, love, funny and 3D comics. When you turn out such a volume of stuff the quality is going to suffer. There weren't enough competent artists around to turn out good work, so schlock was put on the stands. In a horror story it didn't matter if the story stank and artwork was rotten as long as it showed a lot of guts hanging out and blood-sucking and other perversions.

Most of the comic book publishers showed the same lack of taste or any aesthetic sense that their Hollywood counterparts did. Jack Warner, Harry Cohn and Louis Mayer would have fit right into the comic book business without creating a ripple.

Like the movie makers, publishers had the artists by the short hairs; and they knew it, the same way their brothers knew it in Hollywood. For every petty tyrant and tin god in Hollywood there was an equal in New York. For every tasteless, sadistic son of a bitch with a collection of dirty pictures and a mind to match out in the golden west there was another back east with his collection of whips and chains being serviced by a series of $100 a night call girls. "Taste? Who needs taste? I can buy taste." Vulgarity was a way of life.

I met some of this a couple of years later while doing illustrations for some "men's" magazines. The editor or publisher or whoever must have had *some* kind of hangup, or maybe he

knew what would sell.

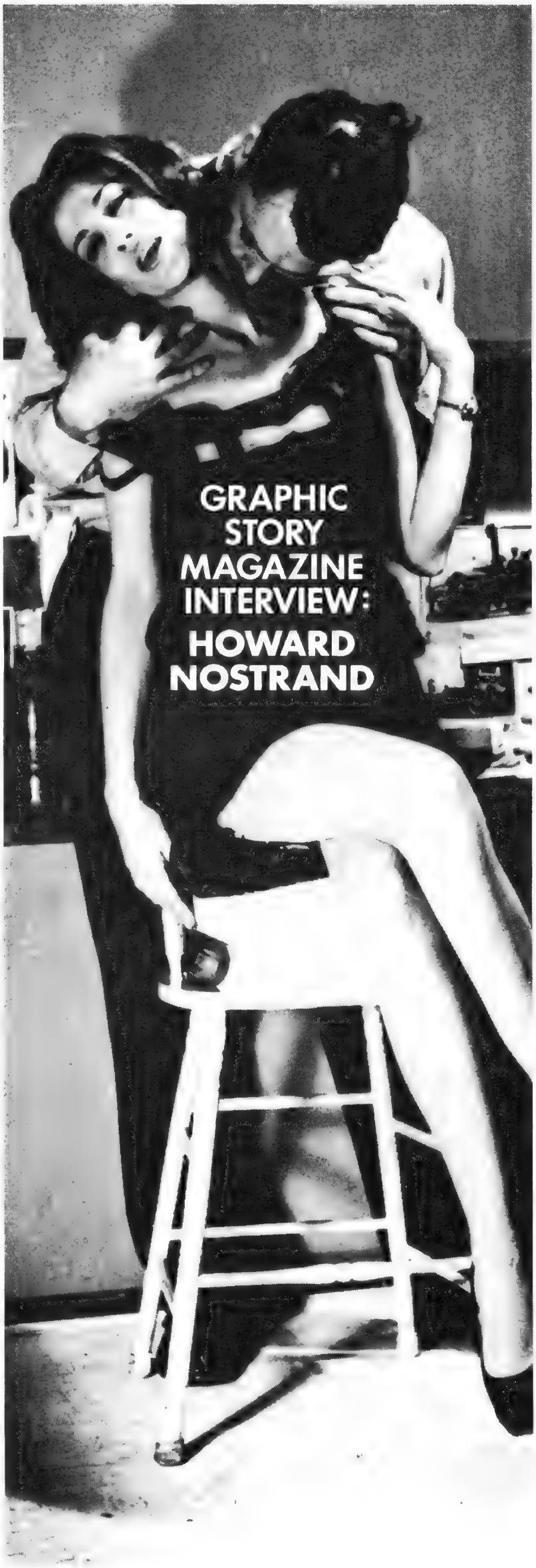
I had done one illustration for a particular outfit of a downed flyer in the Atlantic. I did a pretty good job and was given another story. This one was something else. They wanted a picture of a semi-nude girl lying in the desert with a vulture about to eat her. It is very difficult to draw this kind of scene and retain any semblance of taste. I tried. I got it back. "Whatsa matta wichoo? Show more leg and tit." He also wanted the vulture closer to the girl. I did the job twice plus a couple of corrections. The next job they had was of a guy standing hip-deep in the Amazon being eaten by pyrannahs. I told them to shove it; I didn't need the work that bad.

This was typical of the work turned out by this particular publisher. He had a fetish about animals eating people. There also had to be in each mag one illustration of a guy being whipped. I did one of them, too--some sort of rotten ship captain on the order of Captain Bligh who got his jollies by tying someone to the mast and whipping the bejabbers out of him.

With the advent of the comic book code, plus lousy sales, I was pretty well washed up in comics. I did manage to scrounge up a couple of jobs once in a while, but the handwriting was on the wall as far as I was concerned. I decided instead of becoming a famous cartoonist I would become a famous illustrator. I started doing samples. This was a very bleak period in my life; after doing comics for five or six years I found it difficult to adapt myself to working in new media -- all the training I'd had was directed at producing comic book art and there wasn't any market for it. I was informed that my linework "looked like Flash Gordon." Two years earlier it would have been considered a compliment; now it was like a goddam albatross around my neck.

I tried all the big art studios in New York; Charles Cooper, where Jon Whitcomb was represented, among others; Fredman-Chaite, where another bunch of high-priced geniuses worked and a few others that were very chic or arty or both. I was turned down flat in all of them. I finally ended up in a dump called Penthouse Studios on 8th Avenue at 58th Street -- the only second floor penthouse I was ever in -- being the resident artist. I was paid $60 a week; after they finished taking out taxes and whatnot my take-home pay was about $46. For this I commuted 120 miles a day. I didn't even break even at the end of the week. But at least I was learning something about the commercial art business.

Photos used for the interview were posed for various illustrations, covers and samples; the reason I'm in them is 'cause I'm cheap...



GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE INTERVIEW: HOWARD NOSTRAND

Like Hames Ware (GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE #11), I also became curious in the fifties about Howard Nostrand's unsigned work. The mystery deepened in the winter of 1967 when Wally Wood pulled a Nostrand page out of his files. It was a remarkable parody of the joust Wood drew in his TWO-FISTED TALES #34 story, "Trial By Arms." Wood, who had never met Nostrand, seemed to derive a gleeful satisfaction from this parody, noting that it was not a swipe but that every panel was a new drawing from a completely different angle.

On a rainy night in 1968, carrying a tape recorder and a copy of WITCHES TALES with Nostrand's "8:30 P.M.", I shlep shleped *through the puddles on East 53rd Street in New York to do the interview that follows. In editing the transcript it seemed necessary to leave in many of Nostrand's digressions and sentence fragments, sometimes delivered at an explosive rate of speed. This speech pattern, Nostrand's dynamic personality and his trenchant sense of humor are all interlinked; the editing style and descriptive interjections are an attempt to capture this quality on paper. Some fifteen-year-old memories were revived and expressed as vividly as if they had happened only the week before. The lengthy descriptions of specific stories seem to offer some insight as to how a storyteller must "live" with his characters in order to realize them.*

"8:30 P.M." achieves a mood unusual to comics. By ignoring the bottom captions of the last two panels, the story can be viewed as pure fantasy, a foray into surrealistic back alleys ignored by Eisner. It's almost as if an experimental theater group has wandered onto a stage set left standing after an Eisner production has closed and abandoned the theater.

Although the main objective of this interview was to clearly define the linkages between Harvey and EC in the fifties, there are a number of references to an equally fascinating overlap: comic books and radio programs of the forties, more important then than tv/comic tie-ins are today. In many cases, the comic was the only visual reference for a radio comedy or drama. But that same comic might never have existed were it not for the popularization of the character on radio.

This tie-in was never stronger than in the case of Isabel Manning Hewson. As scriptwriter, narrator and producer of the LAND OF THE LOST radio show and writer of the LAND OF THE LOST comic book, she maintained a remarkable consistency of characters and stories in both media. In addition, she also appeared as a character, herself as a little girl, in both comic and radio versions.

THE MYSTERIOUS TRAVELER, STRAIGHT ARROW, CAPTAIN MIDNIGHT and MEET CORLISS ARCHER are only a few examples of comics which came into being as

merchandising extensions of radio characters. The documentary realism of Charles Biro's comics owes a great deal to radio shows like TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES and THE FBI IN PEACE AND WAR, and Bill Gaines has stated that "The Old Witch" was directly inspired by his childhood memories of "Old Nancy," who hosted THE WITCH'S TALE beginning in 1934. With these ideas in mind I have provided ancillary information on radio in several footnotes.

As an advertising artist, Howard Nostrand today is no longer involved with comics -- unless one considers storyboards for live-action television commercials to be a comics variant. In the mid-sixties he won an award from the American Institute of Graphic Arts for a subway poster, a giant-size cartoon head of a cigar-puffing gangster.

-- Bhob Stewart

What comic books did you read as a child?

SU-U-PERMAN! *[Imitates inflection used by announcer Jackson Beck on the SUPERMAN radio show.]* I was a great SUPERMAN fan. I used to have all kinds of things you could send away for. I belonged to the Superman Club of America. Let's see, when I was ten. I had the original SUPERMAN magazine. I collected all of 'em. Unluckily, we had squirrels in my neighborhood. All the magazines were in the attic, and the squirrels went and made a nest out of it. So if you wanted a pile of confetti, there you were! It was all the old ACTION COMICS. I remember ACTION when only part of it was printed in full color, and the rest was in black and white. There was a feature called "Tex Thompson," "Superman" and "Zatara the Magician." Fred Guardineer did that thing.* He was one of the world's worst artists. He had a swipe file that went on forever. He did some work for Powell at one point when I was there. The whole thing was traced -- he just traced everything.

Did you learn to draw by copying comic book panels?

No. My father was an artist. Of sorts. I mean, he didn't work at it really. He'd gone to the National Academy of Design, the Art Students League and all that sort of thing. He ended up being an English teacher, and I was brought up in sort of a -- what shall I say? -- an arty-type atmosphere. When I was four years old I was tracing -- well, not tracing, I didn't believe in tracing -- you know, drawing Mickey Mouse all over the goddamn place. Later, when SUPERMAN came out, SUPERMAN was a very great influence. I remember... the school paper was mimeographed, and er ...who knew from penciling? You know? I did a comic strip for the school paper called THE METEOR! He looked like Superman, same thing, except that I think he had a bolt of lightning on his chest instead of an "S."

How old were you?

About ten, I guess. Apropos of absolutely nothing, there was one page: The Meteor is lurking around the waterfront looking for clues, you know, and he looks through a shade, here are the bad guys. And he nails 'em, you know. Zap! That's it. But the whole thing was done with a stylus on a... on a... on the mimeograph. You know, what do they call that thing? All the blue garbage that's--

Stencil.

Yeah. The stencil. There was THE METEOR, by God, *printed! [Laughs loudly.]* It was beautiful!

I did art in high school, which was a joke. We had one of these...some old crock there who taught art. *[Imitates W. C. Fields' voice.]* Miss Bertha Fields, her name was. It was one of those high school art classes where all you're doing is, you're drawing a picture of a desk in perspective. That seemed to be the big thing with her. A crap course. All the guys in the football team took it because, you know, if you could hold a pencil, you could pass it. So it was kind of a bore. In fact the whole thing was a bore, any high school art I had. *[Lights cigarette.]*

It was in September of '47 when I went into this place called the Art Career School at 23rd Street and Fifth Avenue. In 1947, when all the guys were coming out of the Army. It is the main purpose of any art school, it seems to me, not necessarily to teach art but to make money. And that was what the Art Career School was devoted to -- making money. There were an awful lot of these GIs coming back from the war. They had the GI Bill with them, and the school was accredited, you know, so here were all these guys. Me and some other dum-dums were about the only ones in the whole damn class there who weren't GIs.

One of our things was called Space Relations, where you have a... you start out with a square and a circle and a triangle, and you arrange them in some sort of shape which is pleasing to the eye. Supposedly teaching you...er...what is it? Er...the word, er ... *composition*. You're sitting there with a glue pot and scissors and all that, and you feel like you've retrogressed fifteen years, and you're back in kindergarten again. So I wasn't too happy about that.

There were two classes I did enjoy. One was called Illustration. They had some guy, an old drybrush-type illustrator left over from the pulps. The other one was a life class. And the rest of it was just garbage. So I stuck there for, I think, a semester

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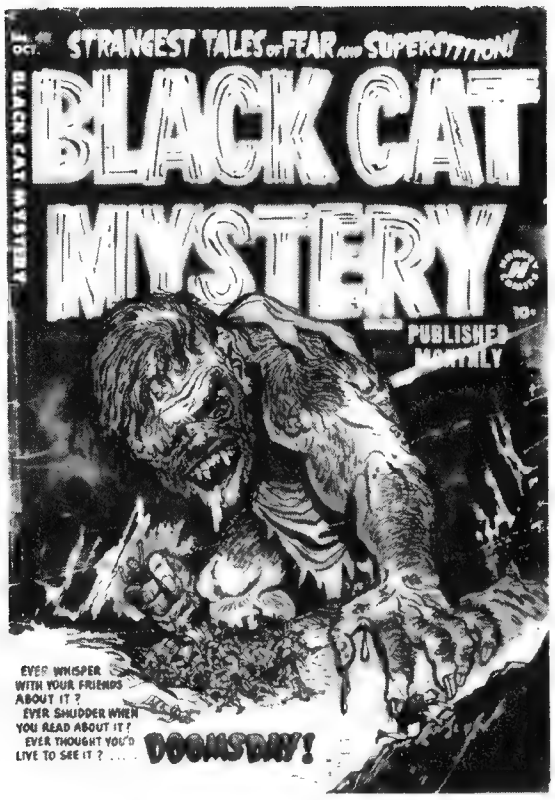
** Fred Guardineer's career in comics ranged from 1936 to 1955. Today he regularly does an art feature for THE LONG ISLAND FISHERMAN, a weekly paper for sportsmen.*

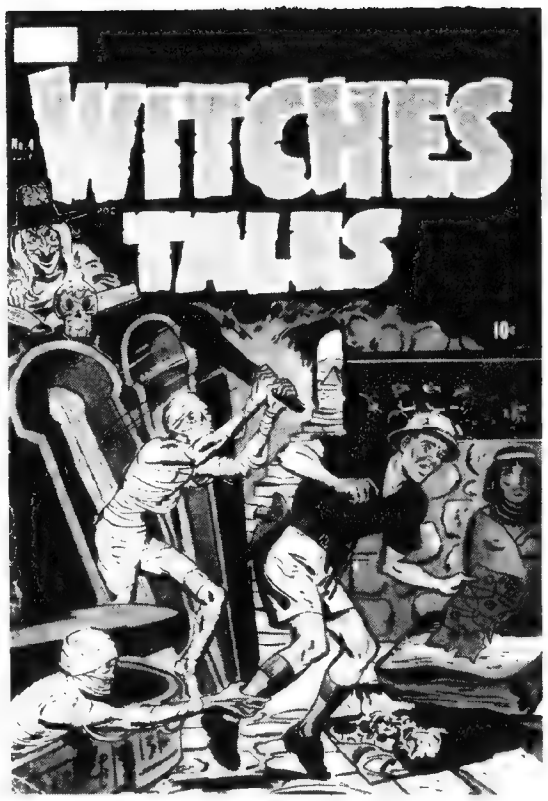
Subway Saturation for Good Guys

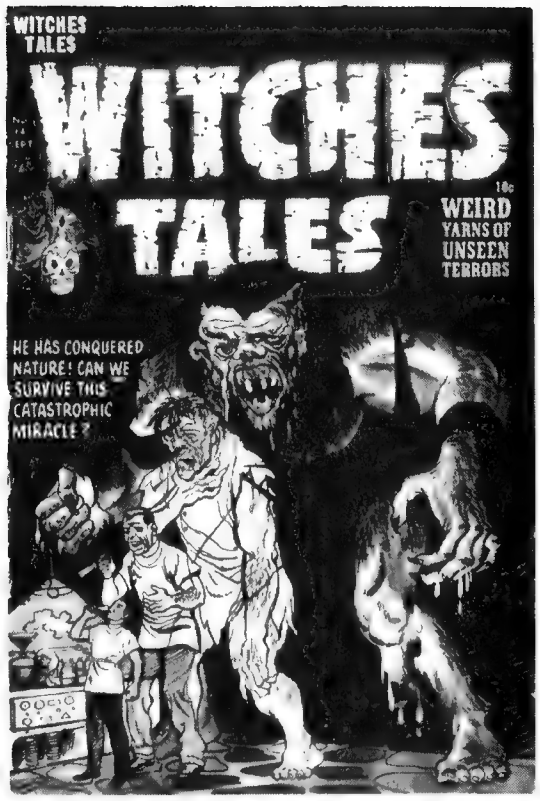
Fighting bad guys is only part of "The Wonderful World of the Good Guys."

SWING IN "THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF THE GOOD GUYS."

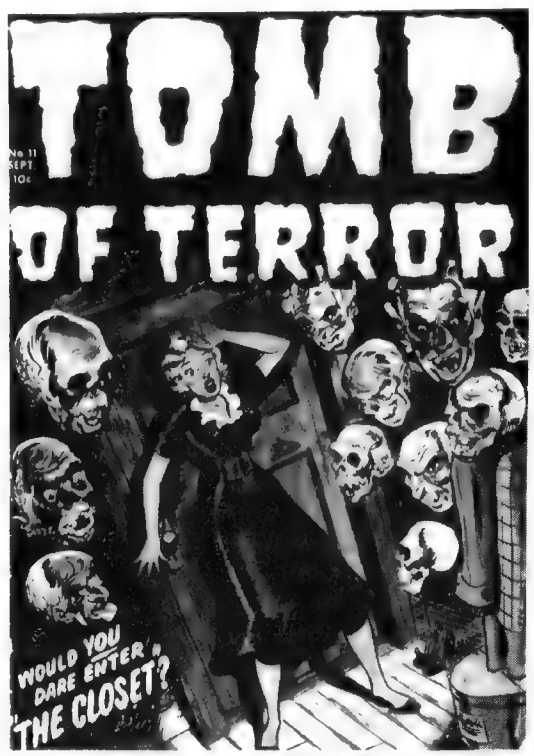
wmca RADIO 57

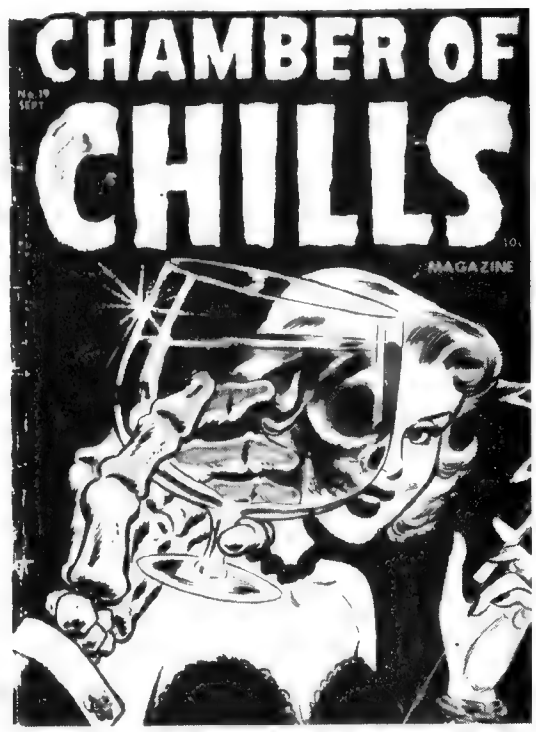

STRANGEST TALES OF FEAR AND SUPERSTITION!
BLACK CAT MYSTERY
PUBLISHED MONTHLY
10¢
EVER WHISPER WITH YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT IT ?
EVER SHUDDER WHEN YOU READ ABOUT IT ?
EVER THOUGHT YOU'D LIVE TO SEE IT ? ....
DOOMSDAY!




WITCHES TALES
WITCHES TALES
10¢
WEIRD YARNS OF UNSEEN TERRORS
HE HAS CONQUERED NATURE! CAN WE SURVIVE THIS CATASTROPHIC MIRACLE?

Copyright 1948 by The Gnome Press





JULY 1949

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Edd Cartier

"Colorama" cover art by Warren Kremer

Bob Powell

YOU ARE DRIVING ON THE STREET WITH THE MILLION NEON LIGHTS! YOUR EYES TAKE IN ALL THOSE LIGHTS THAT FLICKER... DANCE... STAB IN ALL DIRECTIONS! YES, YOUR EYES TAKE IN THIS WONDROUS...
COLORAMA
RIALTO
QUO VADIS
MPH
RPM
SUDDENLY... YOU SEE A NEW LIGHT... A DEEP, BLARING RED... THAT JABS LIKE AN ASTERISK!
YOU DRAW CLOSER... AND THE POINTS OF THE GROWING BALL BEGIN TO MELT... THEN DRIP...
IT SPLITS... INTO TINY PARTICLES. BUT... THE RED NUCLEUS IS STILL THERE! WHAT IS IT? WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

and a half, and I finally quit around February of '48.

Then, of course, at Powell's I was exposed to...he had a collection of stuff left over from when he was with Eisner. Old "Mr. Mystic" things from its inception right until the time he went into the Army. Powell, not Eisner. And, er...with all the old SPIRIT things and whatnot. He was an original. He was certainly an influence on an awful lot of people who were in the comics. Powell hated him. Powell was a bit of an anti-Semite. He didn't like Eisner 'cause Eisner was Jewish. Powell was Polish, so...there was this thing, I don't know, I think he was second generation Polack or something. His name used to be Stanley Polowski, and he changed it to S. Robert Powell. Huh! He came from Buffalo. Lived at 10 North Parade in Buffalo, whatever that is. I imagine it's the Polish section up there. But he had this great hate for anybody Jewish. Also, people who smoked cigars, for some strange reason. I imagine he had...*[Laughs]*... I suppose one of his former employers smoked a cigar or something. He was a real weirdo. Really hipped on this subject of Jewish business. So er... I think it had to do with... well, I don't know if you ever heard of a guy named Victor Fox.* Victor Fox was er...he was one of the oldtimers in the comic business. A real badass. Yeah. He had sort of his office in his hat, you know. But er...

He had the little Fox symbol.

Right. Right. Right. Yeah. He was a bad one. He would pay these lousy rates, you know. And he attracted the worst artists in the whole world. He'd get somebody fresh out of art school, you know, and offer them all kinds of money. "Do this book," you know. The kid would sit down and he'd crank out some sort of comic book for a lousy $12 a page, just to get it into print. This is the way Victor Fox got them. And Fox would just renege on it. He wouldn't pay! The guy, you know, he's done the artwork, and that's it! Of course, somebody fresh out of art school, generally speaking, can't afford a lawyer. Maybe if he did 20 pages at $10 a page, there's a fast 200 bucks, but it costs more than that to hire a lawyer. Victor Fox was just one of the world's worst people. He and Jerry Iger, he was another bad one. Fox and Iger were partners at one point, and they were both a couple of real sharp Jewish characters. When Powell was working for these guys back around '39 or thereabouts, 1940, Victor Fox and Jerry Iger would get in these hell-of-an-arguments. Here are these two Jewish guys, they're yelling "Kike!" and "Sheeny!" at each other, you know, and all the rest of the guys are sitting around going "Har-harhar!" Just beautiful, you know, trying to skin each other all the time.

Another strip Powell originated was BLACKHAWK. I don't know if you remember, originally, BLACKHAWK...oh, Eisner was doing it there for a good long time. But er...or at least he was signing his name. But, if you remember it, it was started out during the war, right when the war started. I think it was before we were in it. They had this sort of a U.N.-type

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** Victor S. Fox, comic book publisher from 1939 to 1950. Fox titles include BLUE BEETLE, MEET CORLISS ARCHER, PHANTOM LADY, WONDERWORLD, CRIMES BY WOMEN, JO-JO THE CONGO KING, ALL YOUR COMICS, BOUNCER, ZOOT, RULAH, FANTASTIC, WEIRD, V... COMICS, MURDER INC., FAMOUS CRIMES and ROCKET KELLY. Much Fox art of the period referred to here, 1939 to 1941, came from an art shop headed by Monte F. Bourjaily.*

YOU APPLY THE BRAKES! BUT...THE RED BALL HAS DISAPPEARED...AND ALL YOU SEE IS A TRAFFIC LIGHT...A RED TRAFFIC LIGHT! YOU WONDER...?
WAS IT THE TRAFFIC LIGHT...ALL ALONG? YOU CAN'T THINK STRAIGHT! YOU STOP TO BLINK YOUR EYES...AND WHEN YOU OPEN THEM...YOU CATCH A GLIMPSE OF SOMETHING...
YOU TURN YOUR HEAD...AND SEE ...A SNAKE-LIKE GLOB OF BLUE...
AND...IT'S APPROACHING YOU. IT'S GROWING LARGER NOW... AND WIDENING...
AND THEN...IT'S RIGHT ON TOP OF YOU...SMOTHERING YOU LIKE A WAD OF BLUE DOUGH...
BUT...A VOICE MAKES IT VANISH...JUST AS THE HURT IN YOUR EYES RECEDE! AND...YOU SEE A POLICEMAN...IN A BLUE UNIFORM!
HEY, BUDDY! DON'T YOU KNOW YOU PASSED A RED LIGHT? LET'S SEE YOUR LICENSE!
YOU SHOW THE COP YOUR LICENSE. AND...YOU REMEMBER THAT IT READS...20/20 VISION! THEN...YOU KNOW IT! IT'S YOUR EYES...SOMETHING HAS GONE WRONG WITH YOUR EYES!
I'M GIVING YOU A TICKET, BUDDY! YOU DESERVE IT! MISSING THAT LIGHT! YOU OUGHT TO HAVE YOUR EYES EXAMINED!
2
YOU THRUST THE TICKET INTO YOUR POCKET... AND LEAVE THE CAR! YOU CAN'T TRUST YOURSELF! YOUR EYES MAY GO AGAIN... ANY MINUTE ... ANY SECOND! YOU'VE GOT TO GET THEM EXAMINED BY AN OPTOMETRIST... ANY ONE... BUT FAST!
DOCTOR
WALK IN
YES! WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
A SILLY QUESTION...BUT YOU ANSWER IT! HE SEEMS INTERESTED...VERY INTERESTED...AS HE EXAMINES YOUR EYES...A PINPOINT OF LIGHT PIERCING YOUR PUPILS.
YES...YES...I THOUGHT SO! EYES...HYPER-SENSITIVE TO COLOR! THAT'S ABOUT IT!
YOU HEAR A LOT OF MUMBO-JUMBO... YOUR EYES CAN'T TAKE COLOR. THAT'S WHAT THE EYE-DOCTOR SAYS! AND...HE SAYS SOMETHING ELSE...
FOR YEARS I HAVE BEEN TRYING TO PERFECT A PAIR OF GLASSES TO CORRECT YOUR DISEASE. THIS IS WHAT I HAVE DONE SO FAR! TRY THEM ON, PLEASE! TAKE A LOOK AROUND!
IS THIS GUY A QUACK? BUT...YOU GO ALONG WITH HIM! YOU PUT ON THE GLASSES...AND YOU SEE GREAT! THE COLOR SEEMS TO REMAIN STILL...STATIC...NO WEIRD SHAPES!
YOU WANT TO PAY FOR THE GLASSES...BUT THE OPTOMETRIST TAKES THEM BACK!
NO, I'M SORRY! THE GLASSES ARE NOT FOR SALE! YOU SEE...THERE'S STILL A FLAW IN THEM...A FLAW WHICH I HAVE TO RESOLVE! BUT...YOU CAN COME BACK TOMORROW... AND WE'LL CARRY ON OUR EXAMINATION!
YOU WALK OUT INTO THE STREET...AND FIND HOW LATE IT'S BECOME! YOU NEED SLEEP...GOT TO REST YOUR EYES! A STREET LAMP SENDS DOWN ITS RAYS...A PALE YELLOW LIGHT...
3

group, you know, a Swede in there, and they had a Chinaman, a little guy running around with a hatchet all the time. And there was a Russian. But Blackhawk was Polish because Powell was Polish. And he was writing it and drawing it, you know, so the hero was a Polack. It was just beautiful.

I always liked Powell's work when I was a kid.

Yeah. Well, he started out, Christ, in 1939...'38 or something, working with Bill Eisner. Iger and Eisner had that Sunday supplement, "The Spirit," and there was "Lady Luck." I suppose she was Irish or something because she had a green costume on. I don't know...shamrock or her someplace. And then there was the one Powell did, "Mr. Mystic." W. Morgan Thomas was the name signed to it. Why? I don't know. It was just one of the names they dredged up. I mean, you know, a whole bunch of these characters worked for Eisner. Tex Blaisdell* works for a couple of different cartoonists, works for Gus Edson doing DONDI. Does backgrounds and whatnot. There was a fellow named er...I don't know, an Armenian name, like Majoujian* or something like that, who did the "Lady Luck" thing. And he is... er...I believe, he was, say, ten years ago, teaching at Pratt Univer--er...you know, Pratt Institute. And well, Powell was doing the funnies and whatnot. He just died... last month or the month before. From cancer.

He had been doing work for Topps Chewing Gum, but he called up one day and said, "This latest assignment. I don't think I can do it."

Um...

And the secretary said, "Why not?" He said, "I'm dying."

Yeah, that's what he was doing all right. So...

How old were you when you met Powell?

I started working for Bob when I was 18. It was in 1948, and we were doing a lot of stuff for Street and Smith. Well, Street and Smith and Harvey were the big accounts back then. We did "The Shadow," "Nick Carter" and "Doc Savage." There was another thing, one of the features they had, "Red Dragon" was its name. That was in...er...what the heck is this guy's name? Er...Cartier* ...know his work? He was one of their mainstays in the science fiction jazz back then. He was doing comics back then, too. He did er...ah, but the stuff he ...you know, like, blueprints, you know, I mean the stuff was tighter'n a tick. Really great. I don't see how he could make any money doing it, 'cause it looked like he used a ruling pen and a compass on everything. It was just, you know, just...the *technician*, you know.

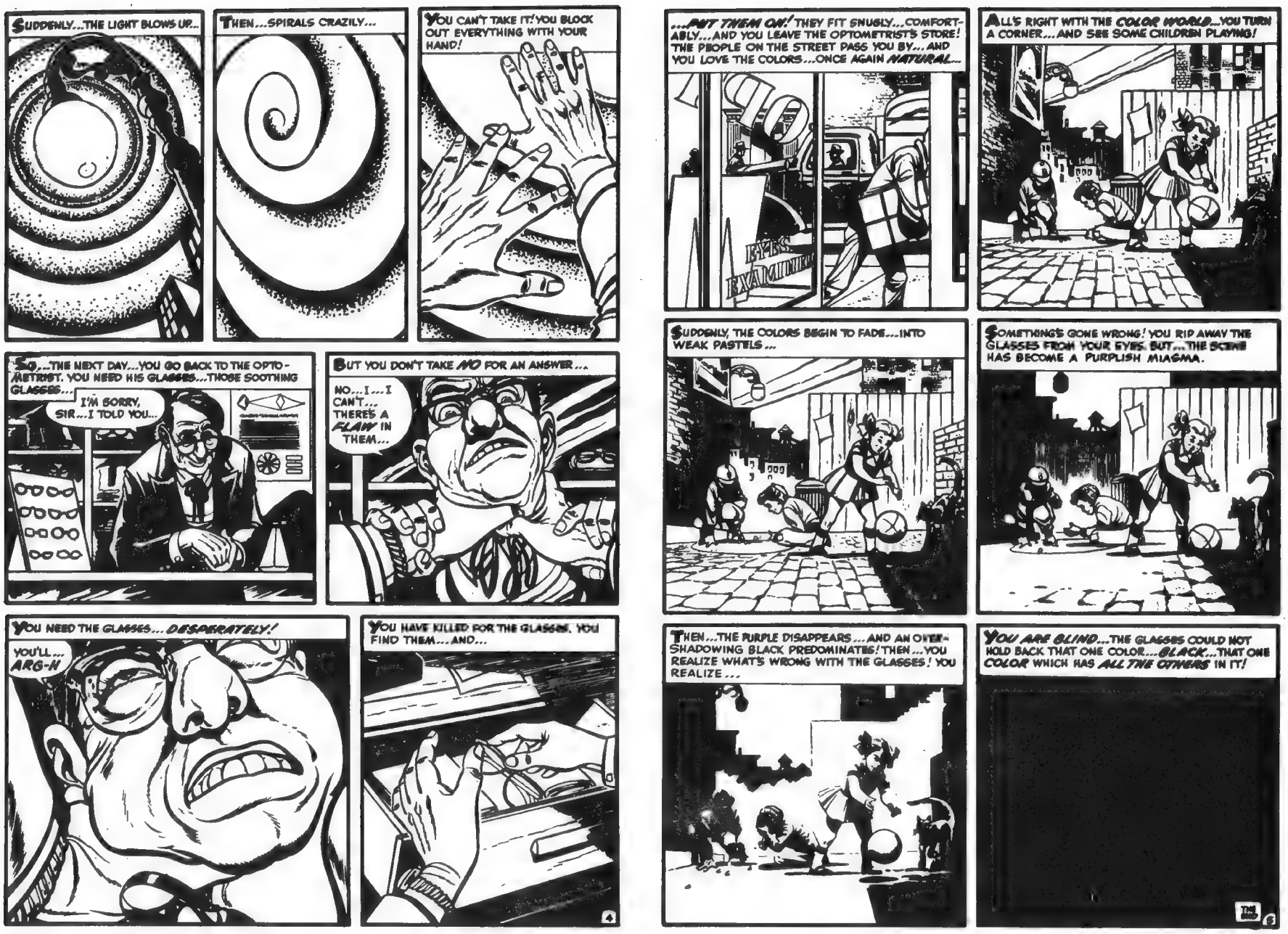
They had some pretty grubby artwork back then. Back in '48 there was a fellow named Bill...Bill de Groosy. Er...De Grasey.** He came from Philadelphia. Street and Smith published out in Elizabeth, New Jersey. This Bill De Groochey or De Grouchey, *[Spells out name]* G-R-O-U-C-H-Y, had

** In the years since the taping and publication of this interview, Tex Blaisdell has been the artist for LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE; writer-artist for the strip since February 1974 is Dave Lettick.*

** Chuck Mazoujian.*

** Edd Cartier, illustrator for OTHER WORLDS, ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION, Gnome Press, Harvey Comics and Street and Smith Comics.*

*** William J. De Grouchy, editor-in-chief of Street and Smith comics from 1941 to 1948.*


SUDDENLY...THE LIGHT BLOWS UP...
THEN...SPIRALS CRAZILY...
YOU CAN'T TAKE IT! YOU BLOCK OUT EVERYTHING WITH YOUR HAND!
SO,...THE NEXT DAY...YOU GO BACK TO THE OPTOMETRIST. YOU NEED HIS GLASSES...THOSE SOOTHING GLASSES...
I'M SORRY, SIR...I TOLD YOU...
BUT YOU DON'T TAKE NO FOR AN ANSWER...
NO...I...I CAN'T... THERE'S A FLAW IN THEM...
YOU NEED THE GLASSES... DESPERATELY!
YOU'LL... ARG-H
YOU HAVE KILLED FOR THE GLASSES. YOU FIND THEM...AND...
...PUT THEM ON! THEY FIT SNUGLY...COMFORTABLY...AND YOU LEAVE THE OPTOMETRIST'S STORE! THE PEOPLE ON THE STREET PASS YOU BY...AND YOU LOVE THE COLORS...ONCE AGAIN NATURAL...
EYES EXAMINED
ALL'S RIGHT WITH THE COLOR WORLD...YOU TURN A CORNER...AND SEE SOME CHILDREN PLAYING!
SUDDENLY, THE COLORS BEGIN TO FADE...INTO WEAK PASTELS...
SOMETHING'S GONE WRONG! YOU RIP AWAY THE GLASSES FROM YOUR EYES. BUT...THE SCENE HAS BECOME A PURPLISH MIASMA.
THEN...THE PURPLE DISAPPEARS...AND AN OVER-SHADOWING BLACK PREDOMINATES! THEN...YOU REALIZE WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE GLASSES! YOU REALIZE...
YOU ARE BLIND...THE GLASSES COULD NOT HOLD BACK THAT ONE COLOR...BLACK...THAT ONE COLOR WHICH HAS ALL THE OTHERS IN IT!

a little studio he ran called Penn Art. I think he must have been paying these guys about $10 a page to turn out finished artwork. The stuff was really just *miserable*. We'd just sit there and look at this crap being bought. And, you know, this was on "The Shadow," "Nick Carter" and "Doc Savage" and whatnot. We ended up doing the whole book then. It was THE SHADOW COMICS and Doc Savage and Nick Carter were two other characters in it. This Bill De Grouchy was taking kickbacks and the whole bit. Kind of a little creep. But the name of his studio was Penn Art. And it was just awful. Like nobody ever taught these birds how to hold a brush or a pen or anything. We finally ended up doing the whole thing there. I think we were getting $25 a page from Street and Smith. I was getting $25 a *week! [Laughs.]*

There were two other fellows working with us. Fellow named Marty Epp and another one, George Siefringer. I started out doing inking, and George did the backgrounds. Marty was inking too, and doing some lettering and helping George with the background and cleaning up and doing who knows whatall. Actually, when we got going, the quality of this work picked up a hell of a lot. Bob started out, on the strip, using a pen, you know. I was a great admirer of Eisner for one thing. And oh-h-h, there's Eisner and Caniff and...oh, Noel Sickles. Noel Sickles was the guy who put Caniff onto this light and shade sort of a thing. He did an airplane thing, SCORCHY SMITH.* But he was the one who came up originally with the idea of, you know, the way Caniff works with all the brushstrokes, shadows and whatnot. When Caniff was doing DICKIE DARE way back when, it was strictly a cartoony-type of thing. Dickie Dare had the little, you know, sort of Little Orphan Annie sort of a face. Not really, but that kind of art treatment without any lights and shade. Anyway, it was, you know, Caniff and Sickles and that sort of influence. Plus Bill Eisner.

Actually, I hadn't given that much thought to the comics before I started working for Bob.

When you would work on these stories, would you listen to the radio programs while you worked?

No, no...you mean as far as--

Well, say, you're sitting there working, and you say, "THE SHADOW is coming on..."

When THE SHADOW was coming on, we were generally at home. We put in a nine-to-five pretty much. The whole thing was run pretty much as a business. He started out with George Siefringer and then hired Marty Epp. I was the last one to get in on the staff. The original three...we were the ones who made all the money for him. And occasionally, you know, you'd take on somebody else, but it was kind of hard to come by anybody with talent. You put something in front of them, and all they've got... Christ, they couldn't even *erase* good. They would get some sort of dumb little salary, and, generally speaking, it wasn't worth the effort, wasn't worth the money paid them. They were kind of a bunch of duds.

Beginning in 1952 with your own stories, that was how many years you drew horror stories?

To '54 or thereabouts. Yeah. 'Cause then I decided...well, I didn't decide. The business decided for me. I

** Noel Sickles drew SCORCHY SMITH between 1935 and 1938. Sickles left comics to illustrate for LIFE, THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, THIS WEEK, etc., and win awards from the Art Directors' Club and the Society of Illustrators.*

guess it was late '54 when the whole thing started going to pot. Christ, I don't know. I tried to get work in... "OK! I will now become a famous illustrator!" But, as far as samples are concerned, you're not going to get any illustration jobs with samples like this...*[Flips pages of 1954 WITCHES TALES.]*

Nobody was buying comic strips, or comic books, for that matter. I worked up a bunch of new samples, and I knew absolutely nothing about the commercial art business. I would shlep around to these various publications, you know. I used to have the King Midas In Reverse -- everything I touched turns to garbage. I'd do a job for a magazine, it would fold immediately.

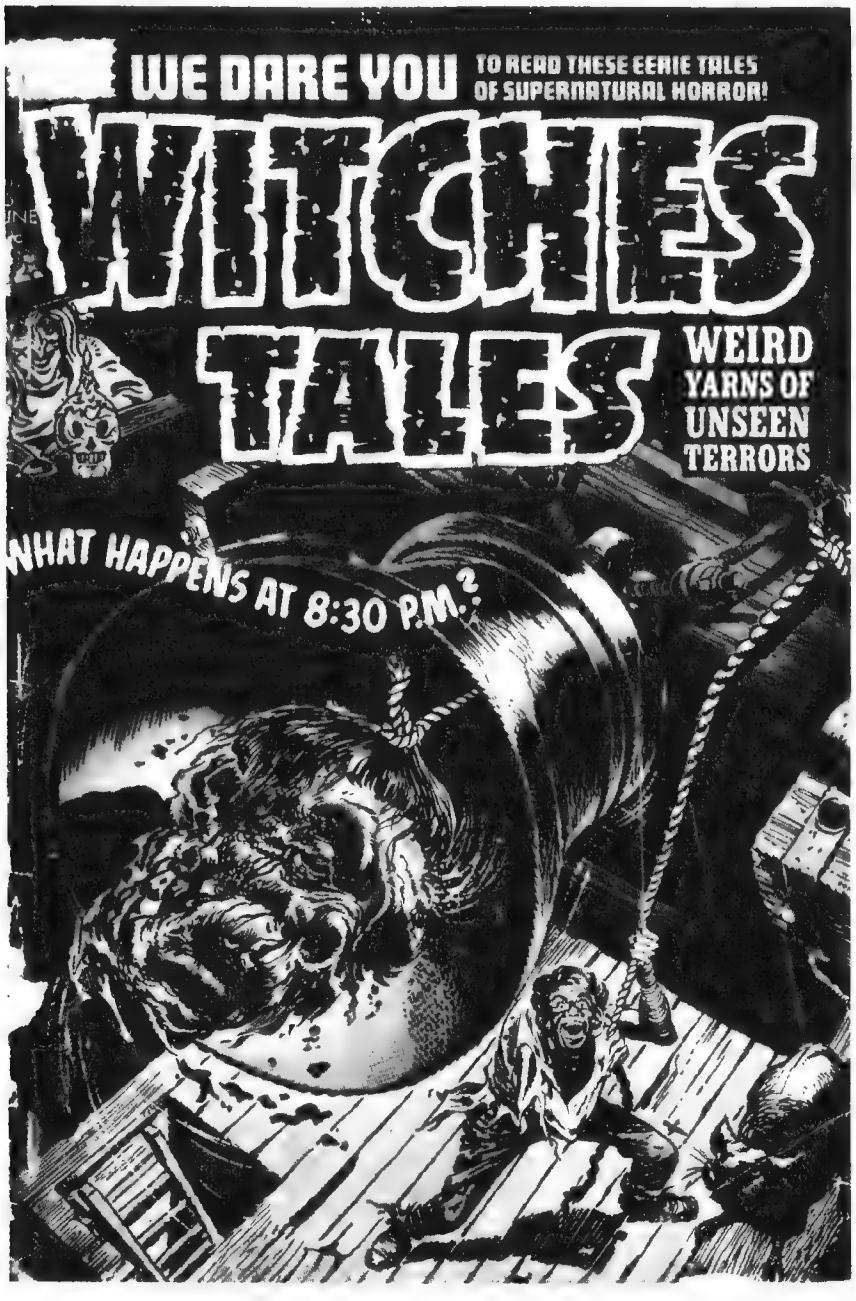
Well, Popular Publications -- they turn out ARGOSY and ADVENTURE and that sort of thing. They also used to turn out a bunch of pulps. The pulps were going the same way as the comics did. I think I did one job for a pulp magazine, that was their last issue. Then I did a job for, I think it was BLUE BOOK, and *that* folded. I felt like I had my head in a sling. All I had to do was look at 'em and they'd die. *[Laughs.]* In '55 I ended up getting a job in an art studio. Now I'm doing educational slide films. I've been doing this since 1955, I guess. I put in a couple of years with the various studios and then went freelance. Been working on my own for who knows how long. I worked for Willy's -- this was years ago -- Willy's Jeeps. Pretty much Jack Davis drawings because I was not that far out of the comics.

I did a strip, this BAT MASTERSON, a comic strip, a few years back. I was working with a guy named Ed Herron* who used to write for National. And er...that died. I mean, it was just awful. And I worked for Caniff for a while. He spends, you know, an awful lot of his time flitting around the country going to Air Force bases, when he should be sitting in his little house turning out STEVE CANYON. One point a few years back...this was after the BAT MASTERSON thing expired, maybe six months after it died, I got a call from Caniff on the phone, no less. You know, "Hello, this is Milton Caniff." You know, so okay, I'm the Queen Mother, you know. Big deal. Like, who is it? And it *was* Caniff, you know. As far as I'm concerned, Caniff is God. He wanted to know if I would turn out like six or eight weeks of the strip for him. So, like I wasn't doing anything, so I said, "Okay." Luckily, I got very busy on the stuff I was doing. I had to kind of decide whether I'm going to work, you know, every once and a while on Caniff's thing or...I had to figure: My future does not lie ghosting Milton Caniff's stuff. So I had to sort of ease out of it. He wasn't very happy with me.

Do you have any desire to return to comic books?

No. I don't know what they're paying these days, what the rates are. But I'd say, put in a good week, I could turn out one story a week for these people. With the rate I was getting, I think it came out to something like $160 a week. When you're 23 years old, $160 a week is not bad. But there's so much *more* money to be made in advertising. There's not enough loot in comics. Jesus, I look at the amount of effort that went into these things, and I shudder looking at it, that I turned out all that. $32.50 and I turned out all that work! You know, ridiculous!

** Ed Herron, as an editor for Fawcett, was involved in the creation of Captain Marvel Jr. He was also one of the BLACKHAWK writers.*


WE DARE YOU
TO READ THESE EERIE TALES OF SUPERNATURAL HORROR!
WITCHES TALES
WEIRD YARNS OF UNSEEN TERRORS
WHAT HAPPENS AT 8:30 P.M.?

HE WALKED DOWN THE INFESTED STREET, A SMILE ON HIS FACE. SERENELY, A RAT SAT ON A GARBAGE CAN, WATCHING HIM. HE ERASED THE SMILE. SOMETHING NOW BOTHERED HIM...
HMM. PLACE DESERTED. NOBODY AROUND. WONDER WHAT'S UP?
SHLEP
SHLUP
SHLEP
SHLUP
SHLEP
SHLUP

COMING FURTHER, HE BECAME DISTURBED. HE TILTED HIS BATTERED HAT BACK TO THE PEAK OF HIS HEAD ALLOWING TWO ANTENNAE TO POP OUT...
NOT A SOUL AROUND. KIND OF... UH... CREEPY. WHERE COULD EVERYBODY HAVE GONE?

The only way to make any money in this racket is by producing more. So I had an ad in the papers at one point. I was going to hire some kid to work for me. Teach him how to hold a brush, and maybe he can erase or blot out the mistakes or do something. If nothing else, just sweep out the studio. I hired this kid, and then they came up with the great big investigation where Bill Gaines was sitting down there in Washington or wherever with Kefauver. And everybody got very leery indeed. The next thing you know, they all had to have the Stamp of Approval thing on it. And that wasn't quite the end 'cause I was working on these things after they had the...this was after I was out of the business supposedly. What the hell's the name of the magazine? I've forgotten what it was, but I wrote and drew the things. Again, it was an imitation MAD. This was after MAD became a 25¢ magazine. PANIC!

I was involved with Bob Powell on that. It was supposedly a humor magazine, although Powell was not particularly a humorous fellow. He didn't know how to write humor. He didn't know the whole premise of humor. The whole thing just eluded him. When we were doing this humor magazine for Harvey I ended up writing the whole damn thing and drawing half of it, and Powell was doing the other half. But, unluckily, it didn't last too long before the whole business went down the drain. They did this 25¢ magazine, you know, with no color and all kinds of zipatone and Ben Day all over the place. And er...it went on...the old time automobile. Why? I don't know. Glidden Tour. Ours was called the Hidden Tour. Why? I don't know. In that one I...heh...you know, you do old cars. The old car artist in this country is Peter Helck.* So I was apeing his stuff. I think I did one of his things and just robbed it right out the window. But, generally speaking, people who'll buy a comic book don't know from Peter Helck, you know, don't know him from a hole in the wall. And I doubt sincerely whether Peter Helck would have picked it up either.

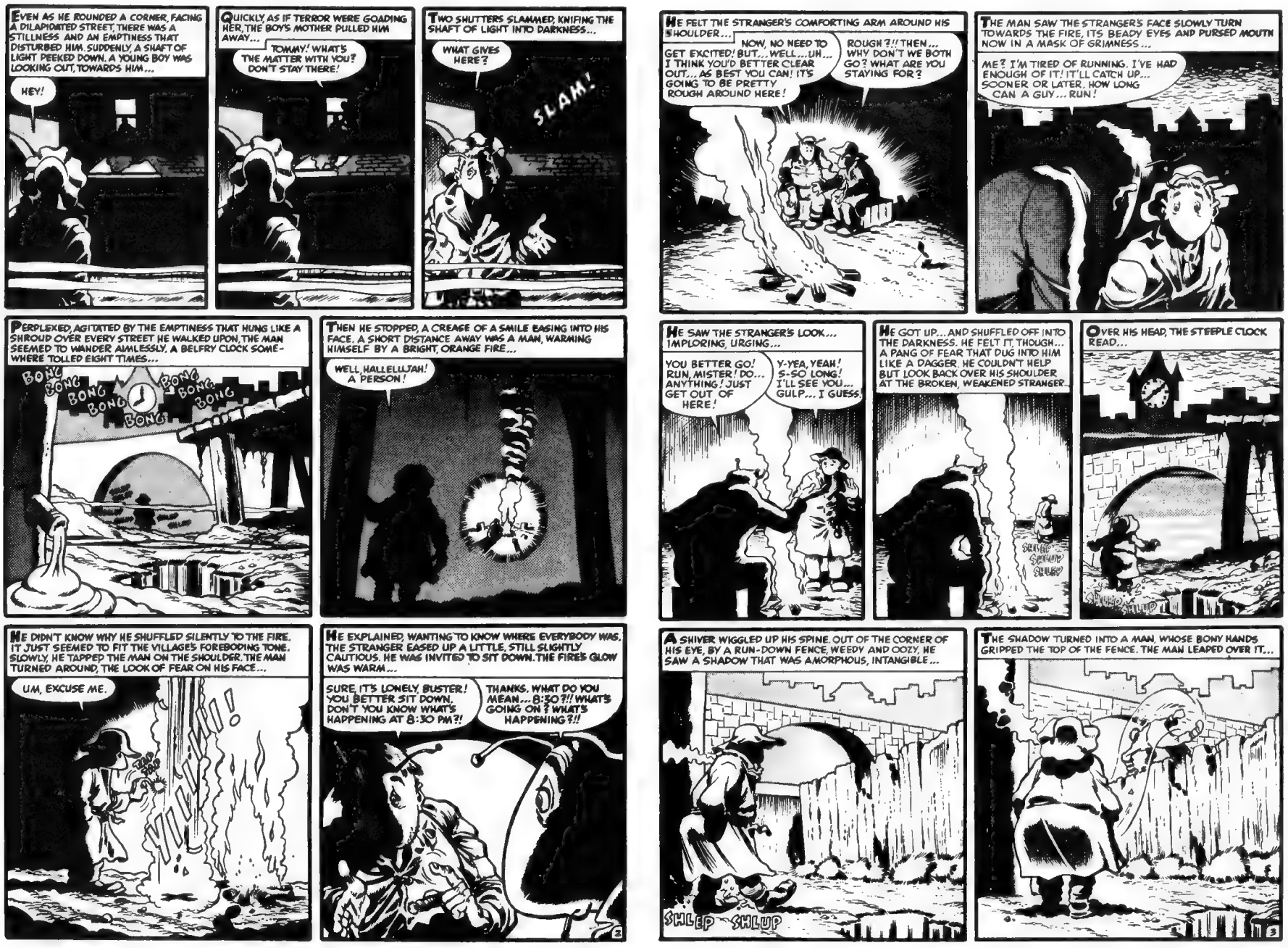
In doing humor your idea was to make inside references to other people's techniques?

Yeah. Well, see, look at most of the comic art that was turned out. Aside from EC, the rest of the art was pretty foul. In this magazine here *[leafs through WITCHES TALES #23]*, I don't know who the hell did the last job, but er...you know, most of the artwork was this kind of garbage. Here's an airplane supposedly going through the sky with a big banner hanging off the end of it, and it's done with a ballpoint pen. If you're going to do realism, for Christ's sake, do it! I don't know who the hell turned that thing out. Really went nuts with a grease pencil on that one, didn't he? Most of this junk you find in here...oh, that was another of mine -- "Mother Mongoose's Nursery Rhymes" -- yes-s-s, yes-s-s *[Imitating W. C. Fields.]* She's cute, isn't she? This was also the Davis kick, you know, where you get some sort of thing, you know, like, you drag in an Indian someplace and put Keds on him, you know. That, to me, was always funsies.

Something that was distinctly your own trademark was the use of heavy outlines.

Yeah. I used that a lot on this cartoony stuff. Just sort of pulled it out of the regular straight garbage I did. You know, you finish up a job, put a heavy outline around it.

** Helck's automobile paintings can be found in back issues of THE LAMP and SPORTS CARS ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE.*


EVEN AS HE ROUNDED A CORNER, FACING A DILAPIDATED STREET, THERE WAS A STILLNESS AND AN EMPTINESS THAT DISTURBED HIM. SUDDENLY, A SHAFT OF LIGHT PEEKED DOWN. A YOUNG BOY WAS LOOKING OUT, TOWARDS HIM...
HEY!
QUICKLY, AS IF TERROR WERE GOADING HER, THE BOY'S MOTHER PULLED HIM AWAY...
TOMMY! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU? DON'T STAY THERE!
TWO SHUTTERS SLAMMED, KNIFING THE SHAFT OF LIGHT INTO DARKNESS...
WHAT GIVES HERE?
SLAM!
HE FELT THE STRANGER'S COMFORTING ARM AROUND HIS SHOULDER...
NOW, NO NEED TO GET EXCITED! BUT...WELL...UH... I THINK YOU'D BETTER CLEAR OUT... AS BEST YOU CAN! IT'S GOING TO BE PRETTY ROUGH AROUND HERE!
ROUGH?!! THEN... WHY DON'T WE BOTH GO? WHAT ARE YOU STAYING FOR?
THE MAN SAW THE STRANGER'S FACE SLOWLY TURN TOWARDS THE FIRE, ITS BEADY EYES AND PURSED MOUTH NOW IN A MASK OF GRIMNESS...
ME? I'M TIRED OF RUNNING. I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF IT! IT'LL CATCH UP... SOONER OR LATER. HOW LONG CAN A GUY... RUN!
PERPLEXED, AGITATED BY THE EMPTINESS THAT HUNG LIKE A SHROUD OVER EVERY STREET HE WALKED UPON, THE MAN SEEMED TO WANDER AIMLESSLY. A BELFRY CLOCK SOMEWHERE TOLLED EIGHT TIMES...
BONG BONG BONG BONG BONG BONG BONG BONG
THEN HE STOPPED, A CREASE OF A SMILE EASING INTO HIS FACE. A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY WAS A MAN, WARMING HIMSELF BY A BRIGHT, ORANGE FIRE...
WELL, HALLELUJAH! A PERSON!
HE SAW THE STRANGER'S LOOK... IMPLORING, URGING...
YOU BETTER GO! RUN, MISTER! DO... ANYTHING! JUST GET OUT OF HERE!
Y-YEA, YEAH! S-SO LONG! I'LL SEE YOU... GULP... I GUESS!
HE GOT UP... AND SHUFFLED OFF INTO THE DARKNESS. HE FELT IT, THOUGH... A PANG OF FEAR THAT DUG INTO HIM LIKE A DAGGER. HE COULDN'T HELP BUT LOOK BACK OVER HIS SHOULDER AT THE BROKEN, WEAKENED STRANGER...
SHLEP SHLUP SHLEP
OVER HIS HEAD, THE STEEPLE CLOCK READ...
HE DIDN'T KNOW WHY HE SHUFFLED SILENTLY TO THE FIRE. IT JUST SEEMED TO FIT THE VILLAGE'S FOREBODING TONE. SLOWLY, HE TAPPED THE MAN ON THE SHOULDER. THE MAN TURNED AROUND, THE LOOK OF FEAR ON HIS FACE...
UM, EXCUSE ME.
YIIIIIII!
HE EXPLAINED, WANTING TO KNOW WHERE EVERYBODY WAS. THE STRANGER EASED UP A LITTLE, STILL SLIGHTLY CAUTIOUS. HE WAS INVITED TO SIT DOWN. THE FIRE'S GLOW WAS WARM...
SURE, IT'S LONELY, BUSTER! YOU BETTER SIT DOWN. DON'T YOU KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING AT 8:30 PM?!
THANKS. WHAT DO YOU MEAN... 8:30?!! WHAT'S GOING ON? WHAT'S HAPPENING?!!
A SHIVER WIGGLED UP HIS SPINE. OUT OF THE CORNER OF HIS EYE, BY A RUN-DOWN FENCE, WEEDY AND OOZY, HE SAW A SHADOW THAT WAS AMORPHOUS, INTANGIBLE...
SHLEP SHLUP
THE SHADOW TURNED INTO A MAN, WHOSE BONY HANDS GRIPPED THE TOP OF THE FENCE. THE MAN LEAPED OVER IT...

But I don't know whether it makes it look like cartoony or not. *[Laughs.]*

That was right...and then they had their insignia, the "H" for Harvey. Oh! *[Sees ad for FLIP.]* Here's FLIP here. Let's see, that was one of my covers. What was it? I think that *was* one of my covers there. *[Reads.]* "Humor brewed in a cracked pot...FLIP." Yeah, that was one of mine. Now what the hell's going on there I don't know.

Did you save your work?

I have some of it, but most of it just disappeared.

Did Harvey ever give originals back?

I don't know. You figure, they've been in business now for a good long time. Started during World War Two. Al Harvey had a couple of little grubby magazines he turned out. Oh, like BUDDIES and ARMY LAUGHS and that sort of thing. Little, sort of little hoohah magazines, and, during the war, paper was scarce. So every publisher had a certain allotment given to them. Al, for some strange reason, got a paper allotment, and at that point he could sell anything he printed. With his allotment he had more paper than he was using when he was going full blast. So that's when he got into comic books. He started when there just wasn't any competition, during the war with ARMY BUDDIES and that kind of crap. He made a million bucks out of it, and then, after the war, it was...what the hell were they turning out? Christ, we used to do a thing called "Tommy Tween." The basis for that was Henry Aldrich. It started out being Henry Aldrich. I think it was Henry Aldrich in one issue. And then, like, Ezra Stone jumped on it with both feet.* Still the same guy, but er...

You mean it was an actual caricature of Ezra Stone?

No, it wasn't a caricature of Ezra Stone, but the whole situation -- "Coming, mother," crap, you know, and all that junk. He had his buddy, Homer, and the rest of that garbage. I guess, hell, it *was*...it was a blatant copy of Henry Aldrich.

Also, we did a thing called THE MAN IN BLACK, too, for Harvey. One of their other titles here was BLACK CAT MYSTERY. Black Cat was a lady in a cat costume, you know. Like Batman, same thing with ears except hers had whiskers, and she wore a leotard. No cape. But she was all over black, and she went around doing things...fighting evil. Now what the heck was the guy's...this fellow who did BLACK CAT used to work for Caniff at one point and...

Lee Elias?

Right. Lee Elias. Lee Elias did a whole bunch of stuff for Harvey. Alfred Andriola did, too. Well, they reprinted a lot of the KERRY DRAKE things. *[Lights cigarette.]*

Why did Harvey feel they had to soft-peddle horror in their books?

Harvey had a sort of chicken attitude about horror stuff. Like, it should be horrible but not *too* horrible. Well, I mean, you look at these things here. Granted, they get a little ghastly every once in a while, but, generally speaking, I mean, they

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** THE ALDRICH FAMILY, adapted from Clifford Goldsmith's Broadway play titled WHAT A LIFE!, began on radio in 1939. Many listeners referred to it simply as "Henry Aldrich" because of the show's opening: Henry's mother called out, "Hen-REE! HENRY ALDRICH!" and Henry answered, "Coming, mother!" Ezra Stone, among others, starred as the radio Henry Aldrich. James Lydon portrayed the character in the film series of the early forties. Bobby Ellis was Henry when THE ALDRICH FAMILY began on tv in 1949.*

THE GUY WAS RUNNING. HE WAS SURE OF IT. SUDDENLY, HE FELT A SCURRYING BEHIND HIM AND THE TRAMPLE OF FEET MOVING RAPIDLY... HE WHIRLED...
SHLOP SHLOP SHLOP SHLOP SHLOP
SOMETHING WAS HAPPENING, IT WAS LIKE A SNOW-BALL ON A HILL, ROLLING DOWNWARD AND GETTING BIGGER. SOMEBODY ELSE BRUSHED BY HIM...AND RAN OFF...
HIS MIND DANCED WITH CRAZINESS. HE WAS CAUGHT, HYSTERICALLY CAUGHT BY A DEATH HE KNEW WAS COMING. DAZED, UNBELIEVING, HE BACKED UP AGAINST A STORE WINDOW, TRYING TO GET HIS BEARINGS, TO SET THINGS RIGHT...
GOT TO THINK.../ IT'S GOING TO HAPPEN...AT... 8:30! WH-WHA; TIME IS IT... NOW?
CHAS. K
72
ISIONS
THE STORE'S INTERIOR WAS LIT BY A SINGLE BULB. HE LOOKED INSIDE, NOTICING THE CLOCK HANGING ON THE WALL. HE GULPED, THEN SCREAMED...
YEOW!
VISIONS
HE PUT HIS GRIMY FINGERNAILS TO HIS MOUTH, SWEAT BEADS FORMED ON HIS INKY BROW. FEAR...COLD AND ABSOLUTE ...CHOKED HIM, KNOTTING HIS THROAT IN AN UNCONSUMING BALL...
LORD...LORD...!
AND... HE BEGAN TO RUN...
SHLEP SHLUP
BUT... HE DIDN'T KNOW WHERE TO GO. EVERY AVENUE SEEMED BLOCKED, EVERY DIRECTION SEEMED TO END IN A MAZE. HE HEADED FOR AN ALLEY, TRIPPING OVER AN ASH-CAN. THE METALLIC DIN RESOUNDED IN CLAMOR...
CRASSHH!
THE UGLY MYSTERY, BLACK AND IMPENDING, BEGAN TO CLOSE IN. HIS BLOOD POUNDED FURIOUSLY. IT WAS ALL SO HORRIFYING THAT A WHITE DROP THAT SPLATTERED ON HIS SHOULDER SEEMED UNCOMMON... SEEMED OUT-OF-PLACE...
EH? WHA--? RAIN?!!
72
IT WASN'T RAIN THOUGH! THE DROPS WEREN'T COOLING! THEY WERE HOT, COMING DOWN IN A STEADY STREAM... SEARING EVERYTHING AROUND HIM IN WHITE-HEAT...
NO, NO! NOT RAIN...
HE VEERED, SLUSHING AWAY FROM A RED GLASS EYE, AND RAN WITH INCREASED FERVOR. HE CHURNED THE GROUND BENEATH HIM IN HUGE GLOBS OF WETTNESS, HEADING INTO DARKNESS AND BLIND DIRECTION...
DEAD END
UNTIL HE FACED AN EMPTY FETID STREET. HE STOOD ALONE... HORRIBLY ALONE... IN THE MUCK THAT HAD THE SWEET SCENT OF HOME...
WH-WHERE CAN I GO? WHY AM I RUNNING? WHAT THE BLAZES IS GOING ON, ANY HOW?
4
THE STREAM POURED DOWN IN ENDLESS, SEARING PATTERNS... SEARING EVERYTHING... SCORCHING THE STREET. HE SMELLED HIS OWN FLESH... IN ITS SCORCHING, ROTTED MIASMA... AND HE REALIZED WHAT WAS HAPPENING... AND WHAT HE WAS...
I KNOW... I KNOW! IT'S... 8:30...
HE WAS A GERM!
THE STREAM... NOW STREAKS... BEGAN TO BURN HIM... BURN HIM ALIVE...
EIGHT... THIRTY... EIGHT... THIR... YEOOWWWW!
AND THE STREAKS WERE... ALL-CONSUMING... ALL POWERFUL... X-RAYS!
THE END.
6

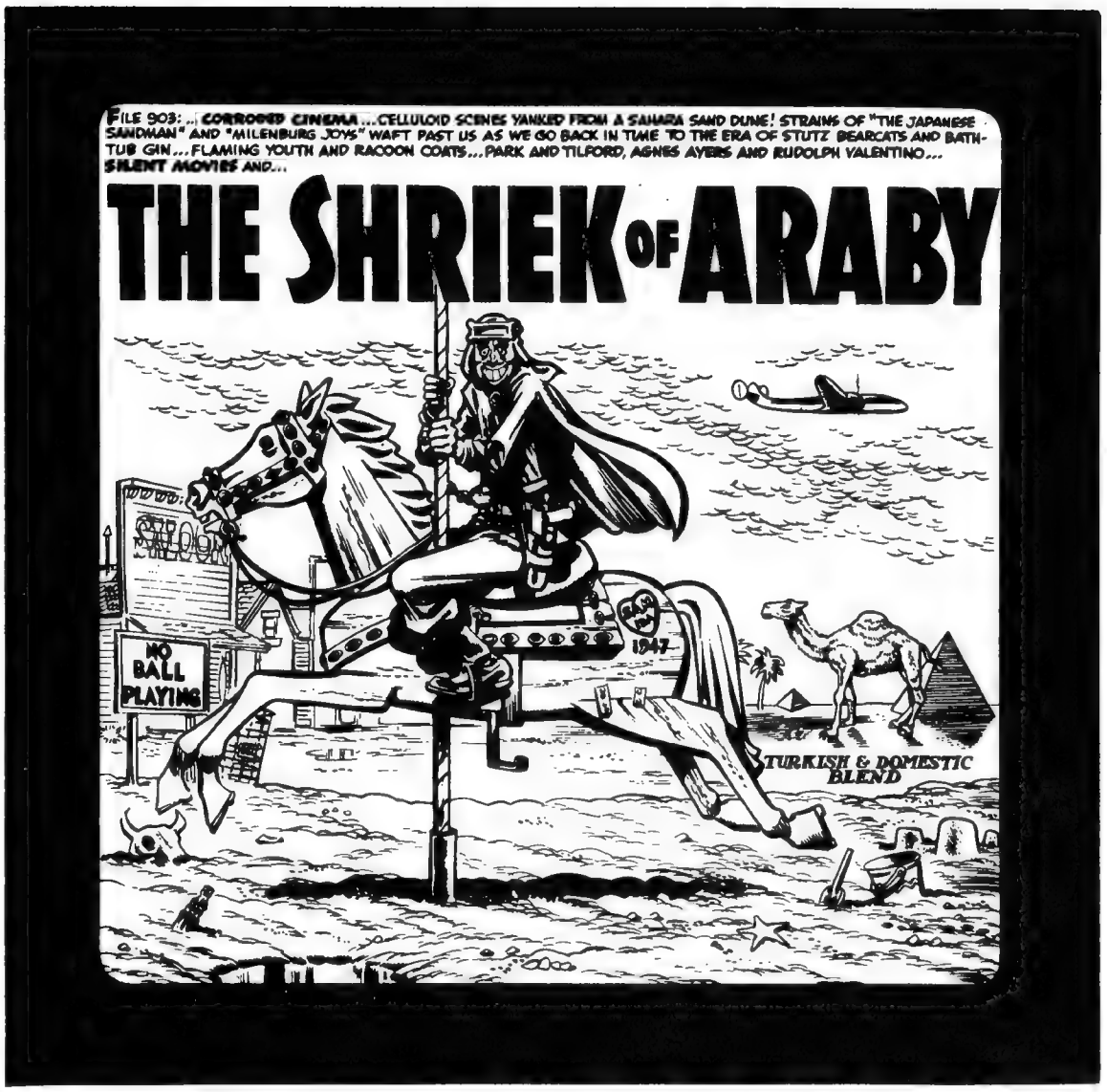
never...I suppose they figured they wanted to keep it in fairly good taste. You know, when you look at this thing I did *[the story "8:30 P.M." in WITCHES TALES #25]* there's nothing particularly horrible about it, you know. I mean, it's this little germ wandering around. You don't know it, but there he is -- a germ. And the fact that the germ gets killed, nodoby's going to lie awake nights thinking about it. You know, you look at some of the stuff that EC ...well, the stories were just...this was like pap. It was garbage, you know, 'cause the EC stuff, some thought went into the conception of it, and Harvey Kurtzman was in on most of that stuff. You had all of these top artists working there who took pride in their work. Most of these characters, Christ, you know, "Let's rap it out and get another buck" was about the way it was, you know.

Anybody who would turn out a piece of crap like this, you know, like, turn out a picture like that, I mean, certainly, he had absolutely no talent or he doesn't take any pride in his work. And er...that's what, you know, I was trying to...you know, with this business, too. Say, things like this where you figure er...in case I did want to branch out and get any more work, at least I had something to show for a sample. Now with this kind of crap, you know, where could you go with it? You know, I mean, *really*...it's just...it's foul. You know, it's not good. The layout stinks, the whole thing.

I don't know if you notice on Powell's stuff where he goes in for all kinds of funny breakdowns on the page. He finally figured out something. But he used to go and...well, this sort of *crap*. The page would look so goddamn filled up and jumpy. Some of THE SHADOW stuff we used to do, he'd have round panels and triangular panels and, you know, Christ, you'd need a road map just to read the damn thing.

If EC had nine panels on a page, some went one, two, three, one, two, three, so you would read it. A lot of these guys tried to keep the eye busy by just breaking up the page to a point where the page looks interesting. You can't *read* the damn thing... it just looks interesting, you know.

Powell would never have done a thing like this *[indicates top three panels of page two of "8:30 P.M."]*. Powell would have made three different shots out of that. This was also


FILE 903: ... CORRODED CINEMA ... CELLULOID SCENES YANKED FROM A SAHARA SAND DUNE! STRAINS OF "THE JAPANESE SANDMAN" AND "MILENBURG JOYS" WAFT PAST US AS WE GO BACK IN TIME TO THE ERA OF STUTZ BEARCATS AND BATHTUB GIN ... FLAMING YOUTH AND RACOON COATS ... PARK AND TILFORD, AGNES AYERS AND RUDOLPH VALENTINO ... SILENT MOVIES AND...
THE SHRIEK OF ARABY
SALOON
NO BALL PLAYING
1947
TURKISH & DOMESTIC BLEND

picked up from the EC boys where the artist and the writer worked together on the thing. This I was obliged to do for myself, you know. The same with this *[indicates bottom row of panels, page three of "8:30 P.M."]*... with the same background and the same eye level and the same perspective. The same with the old man sitting here *[indicates middle row of panels, page three]*. I would have liked to do it here, but I had to change it.

Why?

The guys looking at the clock, and the whole scene changed. It was a thing, too, that Powell talked about ...any opening frame of a lot of these stories. He was a great fan of Hitchcock's, same way that Bill Eisner was with er...you look at one of these old movies, an old Hitchcock movie, for example. The first thing you do is set the scene. It wasn't a Hitchcock movie, but you get the idea, you know, if you remember THE LOST WEEKEND. Here's the...Christ, the whole sky...New York City, there it is, all over the place. The camera pans around New York City. It finally focuses on the window. It comes in tight on the window, and there's the bottle hanging out on the string. It goes into the room, and there's Ray Milland.*

This is what I tried to do in this, a lot of these things. I couldn't do it particularly well in this one, mainly because I wanted to get that picture in. The splash panel you can't even consider. But, generally speaking, you start out with a long shot. Say, here's a couple on a park bench, and you come on...real, you know, when you're up on the boom someplace. You're looking way down, and here's this little thing, you know, with a circle of light right there. And you come in closer and closer and closer on them...until you're finally right up on the people. And then you change the eye level so the thing doesn't get boring.

In a six-page script you can't pull too much of that stuff, you know. You're obliged to keep the narrative moving. Eisner could get away with it. You set a mood for the whole thing. With about the first three

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** THE LOST WEEKEND (1945) was directed by Billy Wilder. The opening scene of Hitchcock's PSYCHO is almost identical to the Wilder scene described here. As noted by Christopher Finch in "The Art of Walt Disney," this type of establishing shot is common to films, both live action and animated: "PINOCCHIO opens with a stunningly effective shot -- the camera pulling back from a large white star, panning across the tiled roofs of a sleepy European village, then closing in on the lighted window of Geppetto's cottage. It is the kind of shot that has become familiar enough in live action movies since the advent of power-operated zoom lenses, but taken with the context of its own period, and within the history of animation, it is innovative and spectacular. Nor is it just a piece of flashy showmanship. It serves to capture our imagination and draw us into the atmosphere of the story before a single word has been spoken." Two other animated films which open in this fashion are Richard Williams' A CHRISTMAS CAROL and, with an inventive variation, Fleischer's MR. BUG GOES TO TOWN.*

Ben Turpin and Kathryn McGuire in THE SHRIEK OF ARABY.

shots, you set the mood, and then you go on from there.

It's obvious that you borrowed the splash panel from "V-Vampires!" in MAD #3.

No.

This in the beginning right here...

No, no. You see, the treatment I have on here is strictly Bill Eisner. But, then again, the background and all that is, you know, EC again.

Well, this was specifically inspired by Wood's "V-Vampires!" ... the structure of it?

I hadn't seen Wood's "V-Vampires!" This, by me, as far as I was concerned, this was inspired by Bill Eisner. He used to get his titles in the big opening panel there.

Was this done intentionally--having him block the word on the storefront so it comes out "visions"? [Panel two page five.]

No, not particularly. My grandfather had a store. It says, "Charles Kegler, Provisions."

Who wrote the story?

I think it might have been a fellow named Nat Barnett, but I'm not sure. Nat wrote a lot. Here's another Eisner thing right there *[panel six, page four.]* He always had these little "dead end" things going on. Of course, that's sort of prophetic, too, as far as the story is concerned. I don't know whether it was in there or not. *[Laughs.]* This is the sort of thing I used to get a big kick out of *[panel four, page four]*, all this "SHLEP, SHLEP" jazz when he's running through all over the glop, you know?

I always get a big kick out of this, you know, the "X" on the ground and "TCHSSUU!!" *[makes sound effect]* ...goes straight up 'cause somebody touches him on the shoulder *[panel six, page two]*. Nobody else is supposed to be around.

This humor in the middle of a serious story...

Yeah. Well, it was the "SHLEP, SHLEP" jazz, you know, I mean, always with the footprints going around *[splash panel.]* Actually, it was sort of, with the sound effects I threw in, it would probably make a good, you know, radio show...when they were still having radio shows. *[Mock radio announcer]* "He was a germ, and the X-Rays came down and ate him!"

We were sort of stuck with a certain...the thing, you know, we tried to do was...well, at least *I* did, was try, you know, you get a script and you try to do something with it. Generally speaking, the scripts were pretty awful.

Why is "8:30 P.M." colored this way, with backgrounds in tones of red?

Well, it's supposed to be on the inside of a body, and so everything is kind of reddish, you know, with the blood jazz and whatnot. The only thing that isn't red is this foreign body. It was a cheap way, and they got off easy on that one, I'd say.

We did one...it was the one Kurtzman commented on. I did a takeoff on an old movie, THE SHEIK. How the hell did it go? There was...I think it was called "Quiet on the Set Department." No, what the hell was it? Something...

"The Sheik of Araby"?

Yeah! Something about...we are wafted back in time to the strains of "Japanese Sandman" and, you know, here we have er...you know, bathtub gin and all that jazz. Those weren't the words, but, you know...we have Rudolph Ayres and...Rudolph Valentino and Agnes Ayres in THE SHEIK, and, of course, ours was called "The Shriek of Araby."* The splash panel, I remember, here's The Sheik, he's sitting -- and he's a real dumdum -- he's sitting on his horse. It's out in the middle of the desert, you know, and...it's like a sandpile and a little shovel, you know, that kind of crap lying in the sand. He's got on his burnoose and all that. Only it's a *merry - go - round* horse, you know, and he's got this real Bugs Bunny grin, when you know he's doing something wrong, when he gets all of those teeth showing.

In the background is a pyramid with a camel standing next to it. "Domestic and Turkish Blend" underneath, you know. *[Laughs.]* Right off a Camel cigarette pack, and er...but it has to do with er...I stole the story, I mean, I parodied the story of er... here is Lady Whatthehell'shername, at the hotel, but she's going to go out on a little jaunt out into the desert, you know, with just the barest necessities of life. I put in such a crowd of stuff you wouldn't believe it, you know, with, I don't know, tanks and airplanes and native bearers, and she's riding in her 545K Mercedes Benz and all that kind of crap.

She gets caught by The Sheik and taken off to his lair, and it turns out, all of a sudden, Lady Erminger or whatever her name is, she attacks The Sheik. He goes *running* out of the tent, you know, and she grabs him. He's back in the tent again, and, finally, the reinforcements arrive. They're gonna take Lady What'shername back... Lady Alice, I think, whatever her name was. They're gonna drag her back to civilization. Teddy Roosevelt and Gary Cooper show up to rescue her, and she tells them to go peddle their papers. It ends up with her and The Sheik in another clinch, with the poor bastard trying to escape. She'd found her niche. To hell with everybody else. But the thing you're talking about, the color, it was all done -- since this was a black and white movie -- they did it in two colors, sepia and yellow ochre, I think. Instead of having the white borders around, we had black borders with round corners so it would look like a movie frame.

Do you have the comic?

I don't. I wish to hell I did. That was a nice one, a winner. That was

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** FLIP #2, June 1954. THE SHEIK (1921), directed by George Melford, was followed by a 1922 film, THE SHEIK OF ARABY. The title THE SHRIEK OF ARABY was first used in 1923 for a five reel Mack Sennett parody starring Ben Turpin and Kathryn McGuire and directed by F. Richard Jones.*

BAT MASTERSON
HERRON and NOSTRAND
YOU'VE SEEN THE LAST OF MASTERSON, LADY. THE BOYS ON THE TRAIN SAY HE HIT THE WATER AND NEVER CAME UP.
BUT ARE YOU SURE HE'S DEAD?
HE'S DEADER'N LAST YEAR'S CHRISTMAS TREE!
GOOD NEWS, SLADE! WE'VE GOT THE GIRL-- AND MASTERSON'S DEAD! HE DIED WHEN HE JUMPED FROM A TRAIN!
DID YOU HEAR ME, SLADE? THE GIRL'S HERE-- MASTERSON'S DEAD!
HE HEARD YOU, BUT DOESN'T BELIEVE YOU--
BAT!
TAKE THEIR GUNS, CHRIS. WE'LL HAVE MORE COMPANY IN A MOMENT-- THE LAW AND THE BIG RAILROAD BOSS.
I'LL TAKE OVER NOW, BAT!
WHERE'S FLEERS? HE AND THAT SLADE NEVER HAD MY AUTHORITY TO USE UNDER-HANDED TACTICS! CONFOUND THEM!
10-18
BAT! HOW DID YOU?
I RAN, SWAM AND WALKED; REACHED A TELEGRAPH OFFICE AND FILED MY REPORT--THEN SURPRISED JACKSON AND FLEERS HERE, THE RAILROADS ARE NOW FRIENDS, AND THE BATTLE ENDS...
© 1959 BY COLUMBIA FEATURES INC
THAT BATTLE ENDS, YES, BUT TO THE EAST, ON A MISSISSIPPI RIVER BOAT...
MY MONEY--MY PAPERS! THEY'RE ALL GONE! YOU CAN'T DO THIS!
PITCH THE HAYSEED OVER-BOARD, BOYS!

the one Kurtzman commented on.

What did Kurtzman say?

He thought it was the best one of the book, and that sort of thing. Didn't mean much 'cause I wrote the rest of the book, too. That's the first one I wrote, I think. They asked me to write a story, you know, 'cause I'd gotten into this fight with the editor.

If you say one word long enough, after a while the word sounds dumb, you know. The word we were using was "funny."

"You think that's funny?"

"I don't think that's *funny*."

"Well, whaddayou think is *funny?*"

"Well, I assure you that's not *funny*."

And, you know, this word "funny" kept going around till, for Christ's sake, it sounds like, you know, we sound like a bunch of dumdums. "Well, what you think is *funny* is being hit in the face with a pie -- that's what you think is *funny*. Or a seltzer water bottle in the kisser. Huh? You think that's *funny?* That's not funny."

And...all this funny, funny, funny talk going on. After a while, you want to clean your ears out. *[Laughs]* But that's er...how I wrote "The Shriek."

Actually I think I stole it from S. J. Perelman. He did the synopsis in his "Cloudland Revisited" series. * I just sort of changed the plot slightly, and then it said what *I* wanted. Some of the dialogue is pure Perelman in that thing. I have a feeling that Perelman doesn't read comic books anyway, so I wasn't in...you know, when in doubt, plagiarize, but make sure the guy who wrote it doesn't read it.

What titles did Harvey come out with after the Comics Code?

I think they had two. I think FLIP was another one of their comic type, you know, their imitation MAD. And PANIC, and then they had various and sundry love - type stories. Oh, I couldn't do those love stories worth tweet, you know, I mean they just didn't work out. I was better off on this kind of jazz *[Indicates WITCHES TALES]*. I did a lot of these war-type things, too. Again, you know, EC starts the trend, and everybody else takes up and runs after EC.

Did Harvey give out orders to make their stuff look like EC?

It was my own idea. Powell, you could have given him an order to make it look like EC, and it wouldn't have made any difference 'cause he only knew how to draw one way. All this junk was my own idea. *[Leafs through comic again.]* Now, I don't know who the hell else they got it -- oh, here's another one of my "Mother Mongoose's Nursery Grimes." That's mine, too. This is, you know, pure Davis, this kind of garbage.

How did you get the idea of combining the Davis shading style with the Wood type of brush?

Well, the Wood type of brush...actually the thing that makes it look like Woody's stuff is the large use of zipatone all over the place. He always went in for this business with the reflected light on one side. He'd have a little highlight over here, and then *[imitates sound of a brush working furiously]* right down the middle you'd have a shadow, and then the reflected light coming down on the other side. Right here...here's his little figure standing here which has got the Davis kind of a touch with the little crosshatchy jazz he always used to use.

Did you do that with a pen or with a brush?

Brush. I didn't know how to use a pen. A pen felt very uncomfortable in my hand. But this again is Wally Wood type of a thing here, with the real hard shadow on it, with that shaded zipatone going from dark up here to light down there.

Like one of the editors I worked

** The "Cloudland Revisited" series originally appeared in THE NEW YORKER. "CLOUDLAND REVISITED: Into Your Tent I'll Creep," referred to here, is reprinted in THE MOST OF S. J. PERELMAN.*

BAT MASTERSON
HERRON and NOSTRAND
WHERE'S MISS LOU?
WINDING UP A LITTLE BUSINESS, BLACK JACK! SHE LATCHED ONTO A STRANGER--WITH CASH!
OF COURSE, THE STRANGER DOESN'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON!
I GAVE THE GUY ONE OF MY SPECIAL BLACKOUT DRINKS! HE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT HIT 'IM!
NO USE THROWING HIM OVERBOARD! IN THE MORNING HE'LL THINK HE HAD A BAD TIME GAMBLING AND DRINKING!
SURE, WE'LL SAY HE DRANK TOO MUCH--THEN GAMBLED HIS SHIRT AWAY! LET HIM SLEEP IT OFF!
SO THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED TO NED JENKINS! THEY FED HIM A "FIX"--THEN ROLLED HIM! THEY DIDN'T SEE ME DITCH MY DRINK!--THEN PLAY POSSUM...
THEY TOOK MY FAKE PAPERS AND OTHER CASH--BUT DIDN'T FIND THIS HIDDEN MONEY! TOMORROW, I'LL HAVE SOME FUN AT THE GAMING TABLES!
IT'S A FINE MORNING, MISS LOU--FOR THE STRANGER! HE'S CLEANING UP AT THE DICE TABLE!
11-8
© 1959 BY COLUMBIA FEATURES INC
BUT THE MAN IS NO "STRANGER"! HE'S BAT MASTERSON!
MASTERSON, EH? I DON'T KNOW WHAT HE'S UP TO, BUT WE'VE GOT AN UNPLEASANT SURPRISE FOR HIM!

for, he said, you know, like, Ham Fisher used to be one of the people who worked for Harvey. They did reprints of the JOE PALOOKA things, and they got to know this guy. And he was really...he was out of his skull! But no matter what you thought of his artwork, this guy said, you know, no matter *what* you think of his stuff, you can learn something from anybody, no matter who it is. Over a period of years, you would pick up little tricks that other artists use. Say, you pick up a little thing like this from Davis, or from Wood, and, Christ, they think...what the hell is it now? Used to be one of Caniff's assistants, he did a thing called BRUCE GENTRY at one point, kind of a homegrown TERRY AND THE PIRATES. What the heck was the guy's name? Anyway, this business with the puddles, you know? I mean, you're going to have to do a puddle. Okay, so you do this thing with the little reflections and crap, which is something I picked up from *that* guy. This, as I say, is pure Eisner, this splash panel. I hadn't seen that "V-Vampires!" thing you're talking about, but er...

It's intriguing that you borrowed their techniques but you didn't swipe their drawings. Another artist might have swiped the drawing, using his own technique.

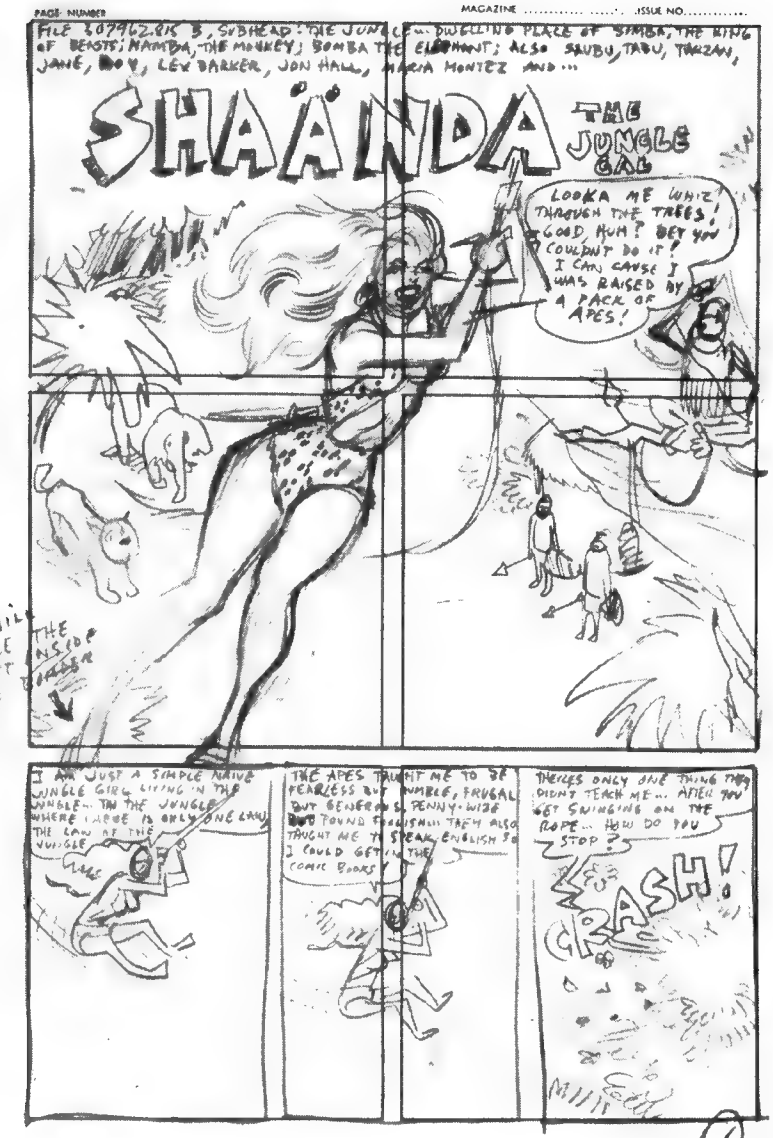
As far as swiping of drawing is concerned, that didn't happen. It's pretty difficult to lift something *in toto*. Christ, you'd have to have a file that went on forever and have everything at your fingertips. Like that thing, "Ivan's Woe," the takeoff on the knights and whatnot. I think the title was in Old English or something. But er...when I swiped Woody's technique, I wanted to, you know, I *wanted* to actually... what I was trying to do, I was trying to zing Wally a little bit on that thing. And I wanted to make it look *flat out*, look like *he did it!* Just because of the subject matter, 'cause, you know, he was always nuts for that sort of thing anyway, King Arthur and the rest of that crap. So I spent more time on it than I should have, just trying to make it look like Woody did it. An in-group joke was the way it came out, with me the only one laughing, because nobody else knew what the hell I was doing. The clowns I worked for, they didn't know from tweet. I could give them anything.

The three brothers were up there at Harvey's. There was Al Harvey, who ran the store. His brother, Leon, who was kind of a boob -- a Nebbish, I think. And er...Al, Leon and er... Bob. Bob was sort of in charge of accounting and that sort of thing. But this Leon... they were always, you know, like, let's find something for Leon to do, you know. And Christ, they'd put him in...they give him his own little office, and he can make charts as far as work and progress, you know, and he can stick pins in the charts. Keeps him off the streets and outta everybody's hair. You know? But he was something fierce.

I brought in one of these, you know, a real gem. One of these things you really slave over, and Leon's looking at it. He took it into the art department, and he had one of the guys in the art department trying to *soften the edge* on zipatone. Now how the Christ do you do that? The guy's working over it in white, and I said, *"What in hell's name are ya doin' to that thing?"* And I took it, and I wiped all the white paint off, you know, and I went around hammering on desks. That's all we need...some *boob* to "fix it up" after I brought it in. You try to get a certain effect, and then you get some...*hammerhead* in the art department's gonna make improvements on it.

It was kind of an ultra-conservative outfit. You know, they wouldn't come out with any kind of a MAD-type comic until, Christ, MAD was selling three trillion copies monthly. And then they'd say, well, maybe they will, you know, put one little toe in the water and see if it's warm enough.

We also used to work for an outfit, when I was with Powell...Magazine Enterprises was the name. It was down



THERE MUST BE A BETTER WAY OF STOPPING THAN THIS... MIZZUBLE APES WOULDN'T TELL ME... "YOU LEARN BY DOING! THEY ALWAYS SAY... LEARN BY DOING! LEARN BY DOING! I'M UP TO HERE WITH "LEARN BY DOING!"
MAN! HOW CAN I BE THE BEAUTIFUL QUEEN OF THE JUNGLE IF I KEEP BREAKING DOWN TREES WITH MY PELVIS?
AH CAINT TAKE IT NO LONGER FOR TWO CENTS I'D... BUT WAIT... WHAT DO MY SUPER-SENSITIVE EYES PERCEIVE CRASHING THRU THE BUSH?
IT'S A KEEMOSAVVY! A WHITE MAN!
WAIT A SEC!
HEY RWANA!
HEY DAN!
HOO BOY!
WAIT UP!
STAY RIGHT THERE
IT'S ME!
SHAANDA THE JUNGLE GAL!
HIDE!
WAIT
FER
MEEE

on 11 Park Place. Vince Sullivan* was the name of the guy who ran it. Ray Krank was the art director. They were doing...there used to be a radio program called STRAIGHT ARROW **, and that was the big thing. We did a feature in the STRAIGHT ARROW comic book called "Red Hawk," who was sort of a *little* Straight Arrow. Sort of a teen age type Indian who went around hittin' people with his cuestick and whatnot.

When MAD came out I said, "Look at that! Look at that!" And Ray Krank said, "That kind of garbage'll never sell." Prophetic words. We could use him as a weathervane to find out which way the wind is not blowing from.

Did you ever go up to MAD?

I went up there once, yeah. Well, see, the thing is, they had Davis and Wood and Bill Elder and Severin. Well, Marie Severin worked for me for a little while on the BAT MASTERSON strip doing color things, you know, but that got to be a hassle. I ended up doing my own color. I think I still owe her some money. She was working in a bank then, I believe.

Did you know any of the other EC people?

Yeah, Graham Ingels. Graham and I ... I have some pictures of him kicking around here someplace. He looked like sort of a dissipated John Kennedy. No lie. Graham was a frustrated fine artist. He'd do oil portraits and all kinds of things like that. He would talk about the dramatic conception as far as drawing a picture was concerned. In the comic book stuff, some of it is not particularly dramatic, you know. He would, say, with the lighting...it was always, you know, to milk the last piece of drama out of it, whatever it is, you know.

Ever work with him on a job?

No.

How did you meet him?

He showed up at my house stone blind drunk one night. This was after I got out of the comic books, and I was trying to be a hotshot artist, and er... "I unnershtand you're an artisht"... or a comic book artist or some damn thing. "Yeah, yeah." I didn't know who the hell he was. He was kind of out of it. He had this booze problem. He'd be all right if he drank beer, but if he got anything else, *[laughs]* he'd turn into something fierce.

With all these hotshots going around up there at EC, with Wood and Davis and all the rest of that crowd,

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** Editor of THUNDA and WHITE INDIAN; DC editor; artist-writer of "Laughing at Life," "Jibby Jones" and "Licorice." Sullivan worked in comics from the late thirties to the mid-fifties, leaving the field for the real estate business.*

*** STRAIGHT ARROW was broadcast over the Mutual Network, beginning in 1948. Sponsored by Nabisco Shredded Wheat, it starred Howard Culver.*

Graham was... what shall I say? He'd been in the business for a good long time. He was older than most of these characters working for EC.

Graham used to work for Ned Pines. They turned out comic books. He was some sort of an art director-type over there. He was an editor or something on one of their magazines back then. He was kind of a sad case 'cause when the horror stuff went out, Graham went out with it. His forte was strictly doing horror comics, and there just wasn't any more horror comics being done. So he was sort of at loose ends. He ended up running an art class for various and sundry ladies who lived around Smithtown *[Long Island]* with time on their hands. That's a tough buck to make, teaching old ladies how to paint. He heard about an opening up at Famous Artists School, so he went up. He was working there for a while, correcting papers. You know, it's a factory. There're all these guys, over-the-hill artists, or illustrators who can't quite make it any more, sitting around there correcting all this garbage that comes in and painting little things to show to the students and whatnot. It was a coupla hundred bucks a week, which is more than he was making sitting out in the woods in Smithtown. Still, it was kind of a drag for him. I guess it finally got to be too much, and he just took off and left. I guess he figured the kids were old enough or something. Robby, his son, was about 12 then... skinny little twerp when I knew him. *[Laughs.]* He's probably flying a jet airplane now or something. That's what always happens with little kids, you know. Robby was short for Robespierre. The reason why they called him that was left over from the old Fanny Brice show, BABY SNOOKS. Baby Snooks had a little kid brother named Robespierre.* They called him that when he was a little kid and the name stuck. I don't know what his real name is. I've forgotten what the girl's name was.** She was one of these girls who's crazy for horses -- but didn't have a horse. *[Laughs.]*

But you never worked on one of his jobs, and he never worked on one of yours?

No. I was out of comics by the time Caniff rang, working for a studio in New York, lovely place called Penthouse Studios. It was the only penthouse that was on the second floor. The reason it was named Penthouse, it used to be in the penthouse of the Great Northern Hotel. And then the studio fell on hard times, and they moved into an office over a Greek restaurant on 58th Street. That was when I moved in there. *[Sardonic edge to voice.]* You're not going to learn very much being the only illustrator

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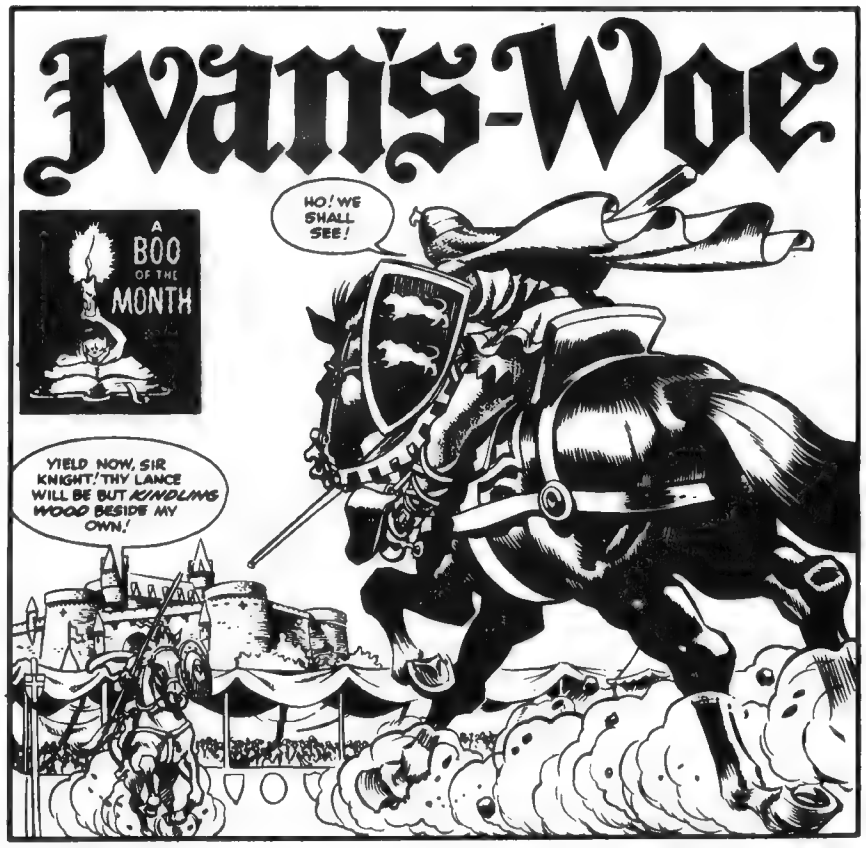
** Portrayed on radio by Leone Ledoux. In 1912 Fanny Brice first conceived her "Snooks" character for a few brief vaudeville appearances, discarding it until a private party in the twenties. In the mid-thirties she performed "Baby Snooks" to much acclaim as a ZIEGFELD FOLLIES sketch, which led to appearances on the CBS ZIEGFELD FOLLIES OF THE AIR. In 1937 "Baby Snooks" shifted to NBC's MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE TIME, and, during the forties, was heard as THE BABY SNOOKS SHOW. Robby Ingels was born in 1947, four years before the death of Fanny Brice brought the series to an end. In a certain sense, then, this famed character lived on radio but was born and died in the world of comics, for 1912 was also the year George McManus began drawing "Baby Snookums" (THEIR ONLY CHILD) for the* New York Journal.

*** Deanna.*

Wood's "Trial By Arms," TWO-FISTED TALES #34.

LOOK! THE NOBLE SIR MALCOLM DOTH ALLOW SIR CLYDE TO RECOVER HIS WEAPON!
FIE ON THEE, SIR CLYDE!
TREACHERY!
UNCHIVALROUS DESIGN!
SIR MALCOLM IS HELPLESSLY ENSNARED!
AND FOULLY BELABORED!



Nostrand's visual parody, WITCHES TALES #23...

in the place, and I didn't know *anything about anything*. I was at that for around a couple of years. I moved out and went to a place called Alexander E. Chase Studios. There were a bunch of hotshot artists working there. I learned an awful lot of tricks -- painting and the use of cameras and projectors and models and whatnot. I was on my own even then. I just had space in the place.

When you worked for Harvey, did you use projectors?

No, no, no. It would be very difficult to use a projector on any of that junk. I didn't even *know* about it back then. Cameras... I figured anybody who'd use a camera is a dirty cheat, you know. *[Laughs.]* Well, what I did, I had a...well, you can tell by looking at all that junk in back of you... *[gestures toward a mound of Polaroid shots used in the educational slide art]* ...is use a Polaroid camera. This friend and myself had a studio where...we had about five or six guys sharing the rent. So there was never a lacking for models. You get a mob scene, you get everybody into the room.

What I'd do on BAT MASTERSON is do a whole bunch of little quick thumbnails of a week's worth of work, and then shoot for about... oh *[lights cigarette]*, maybe an hour. And er... the first one was the one we'd use, you know. Even if the pose wasn't quite correct, the heck with it, use it anyway because who's going to know? I made up the layout anyway, and I don't care. Originally I would pencil the thing and then ink it. And then, afterwards, I got ahold of Neal Adams, and he would end up doing the penciling. And then I'd ink it. Then he started in working on some of the backgrounds, too. As I say, we never made a buck on it...always working like a thief all the time. He's also doing this educational jazz, too. Called him up one time. They needed extra help on it. I thought of Neal, and so he's doing that, too. He's doing right well. Most of the stuff he had been doing was storyboard and that sort of thing for ad agencies, the tv storyboards for commercials. I did a lot of that last year, too, for J. Walter Thompson, for all this Ford advertising that's going on now.*

You didn't mention Reed Crandall's work on BLACKHAWK.

** Both Neal Adams and Nostrand are currently involved in storyboard work, independent of each other.*

Well, it went along. Powell started it. Eisner was doing it for a good long time. I thought it was at its height when... 'cause I think Eisner is just great, you know, I don't know what happened to it afterwards. As you say, Reed Crandall did...I remember one thing that Crandall did. Had to do about a guy... he's a criminal escaping from somebody. *[Describes in detail the plot of "Carrion Death" in SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES #9.]* Very impressive, the way the thing was done. Crandall just drew like a *fiend*. Really quite a job he did on it.

Remember one that... Kurtzman took ill at one point. He didn't have any scripts, and so Davis did one, he wrote it and drew it. Some sort of western thing. Woody did one with knights in it. TWO-FISTED TALES -- that's right -- TWO-FISTED, 'cause it wouldn't have been FRONTLINE COMBAT with a horse and the cowboys in it. There again, I...talk about people robbing from each other. Back when they were doing FRONTLINE COMBAT, Davis borrowed from Willie and Joe by Bill Mauldin like you wouldn't believe. I don't know if you ever noticed any of his stuff when he was working for YANK or STARS AND STRIPES -- some of Davis' work was *right out*

SIR IVAN GWAINE HAS WON AGAIN! OUR FEARLESS KNIGHT HAS MASTERED THE KING'S TOURNAMENT!
I HAVE FARED WELL, AS HEAVEN ORDAINED. BUT FORSOOTH--'TIS MUCH TOO VALIANT A KNIGHT I HAVE FACED NOT TO GO UNHERALDED! RISE SIR GERALD--THOU HAST BEEN A WORTHY OPPONENT!
I PAY HOMAGE TO YOUR SKILL, SIR IVAN! YOU HAVE MY PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE IN ANY UNDERTAKING THOU MAY TAKE!
MOLD! I, HUGO LAVON OF BLACKMORE--THE KING'S EXECUTIONER...THE BLACK KNIGHT...SAY MOLD!
I HAVE TOO LONG LISTENED TO THE SLANDERS WHISPERED ABOUT ME BY KNIGHTS WHO THINK THIS BOY WITH THE GOLDEN HAIR--THIS BEARDLESS PUPPY WITH HIS MAIDEN'S FACE--IS MORE SKILLED THAN I! I MUST SPEAK! I BEG OF THEE PROPER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, SIRE!
MY DEAREST IVAN! HOW MY HEART FLUTTERED WHEN I SAW THEE BEFORE ME! YOU ARE THE BRAVEST KNIGHT OF THEM ALL!
ELIZABETH--IT IS FOR THEE THAT I RODE AND FOUGHT! LET ALL WHO WITNESSED THIS MEET KNOW THAT I, SIR IVAN GWAINE OF HAMPSHIRE--HAVE GIVEN THEE MY HEART!
DO THEY NOT MAKE A CHARMING COUPLE, SIR HUGO? SIR GWAINE HAS INDEED DISTINGUISHED HIMSELF AS MOST CAPABLY AS THOU!
NOT SO, FITZHUGH! KNOW THEE THAT, I AM THE KING'S EXECUTIONER--AND AS SUCH--I AM THE BEST KNIGHT OF ALL! MY BATTLE SCARS, MY UGLINESS ARE PROOF OF MY SUPREMACY!
YAY, I AM THE UGLIEST MAN IN THE KINGDOM... MY BLOODY SCARS MAKE ME SO! BUT IT IS THIS UGLINESS WHICH HAS MADE ME THY EXECUTIONER, AND BEARS WITNESS TO MY MASTERY!
CALM THYSELF, SIR HUGO! WE HAVE MEANT THEE NO SHAME. INDEED--THERE IS NO ONE IN MY ENTIRE REALM TO MATCH THY ARMS AND CUNNING! MY DAUGHTER APOLOGIZES FOR HER RASH WORDS!
NAY! I WILL NOT HAVE AN UGLY MONSTER BULLY'S INTO COWED SUBMISSION! SIR GWAINE HAS PROVEN HIMSELF TODAY--AND NO ONE CAN DENY IT! NOT EVEN THEE, BLACK KNIGHT!
I AM HUMBLED...FOR I WILL NOT DEFY MY PROTECTOR, THY FATHER BUT...WERE THEE A KNIGHT WHO SPOKE THOSE VAINGLORIOUS WORDS, I WOULD SPEW THEE IN TWO UPON MY SWORD!
KING JOHN OF BRITAIN HAD INDEED MANY VALIANT KNIGHTS -- BUT NONE SO POPULAR AS SIR IVAN GWAINE. INDEED--ALL KNEW THAT HE AND ELIZABETH, THE KING'S DAUGHTER, HAD ANNOUNCED THEIR BETROTHAL. THUS--AT THE CASTLE AFTERWARDS...
RISE MY BROTHER KNIGHTS AND VASSALS! A TOAST TO ELIZABETH, MY DAUGHTER--AND HER FEARLESS GENTLEMAN--A TOAST TO SIR GWAINE!
HEAR! HEAR!
TO THE BEST KNIGHT OF THEM ALL!
THEN HAVE AT IT, MY JEALOUS COCK! I CANNOT LET YOUR INSULT TO MY FAIR LADY GO UNANSWERED.
SIR GWAINE! STOP!
TOO LATE, MY LORD! I CHALLENGE THY EXECUTIONER TO A TRIAL BY MORTAL COMBAT!
SO BE IT! SIR HUGO--SINCE YOU ARE THE CHALLENGED PARTY, YOU HAVE THE CHOICE OF WEAPONS!
MY CHOICE IS--THE COMPLETE COMBAT ARMS OF THE BATTLE KNIGHT!
AGREED!

of, you know, Bill Mauldin's. Bill Mauldin with Bill Eisner overtones involved. As I say, you end up stealing from everybody.

I think there was a Bill Eisner influence on Mauldin because he used a lot of these trapped shadow things that Eisner used all the time. Rather than put in a whole black thing, you would put brushstrokes in there instead of a solid black.

You paid a lot of attention to Mauldin's work too?

I did when I was doing war stuff. Every time you get two guys slogging through the mud, you start *thinking* Bill Mauldin. There was the guy with the dented helmet, you know. Davis used that a lot, too. You know, here's the guy standing around. Everybody needed a shave. It seemed to me it was always raining. And there's just, you know, dirt and mud and crud all over the place. I got that, more or less, into the war stuff I did.

What did you think of Krigstein?

I've spoken to people who thought he was just great. Now I know Bernie Krigstein's stuff is supposed to be very avant-garde and all that jazz. To my way of thinking, you know, it just...what shall I say? If you tried to get Jackson Pollack to do a comic strip. I mean, it was just a little too far out for my tastes. If I were doing a realistic-type thing, I would try to get it as realistic as possible as I knew how. Krigstein's stuff got very designy. It seemed that the anatomy of a figure took second place to the composition somehow. Having been brought up on FLASH GORDON and Eisner and, well, Davis and Wood, for that matter, this guy was... it was hard to understand what he was trying to say. It didn't follow the same tradition established by the guys who'd been doing comics since SUPERMAN had started up. It was a complete departure. It wasn't anything I ever tried to emulate at all. Neither did anybody else, for that matter...because nobody ever tried to emulate Bernie Krigstein at all. In anything he ever did. His style was not -- what shall I say? -- it wasn't a comic book style. To my way of thinking, it wasn't even a good illustrative style. Bernie should have been doing fine arts someplace.* He was out of his element, as far as I was concerned, in the comic books. There were an awful lot of people who'd disagree with it, but er...I never met the guy. I don't know what the hell he had on his mind when he was doing that stuff, but er...I don't know, it just er...er...I don't know, didn't appeal to me...

Kurtzman, whenever he'd draw anything, left a little bit do be desired, as far as I was concerned. Every once in a while he would do something, and it was always very strange. Used to be back in FAMOUS FUNNIES, a thing called "Sailor Bill" which, I swear to God, it looked like Harvey Kurtzman's work. Kurtzman wasn't all that old that he could

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** He is. In 1963 Krigstein's work for AMERICAN HERITAGE was displayed at the Society of Illustrators Show. His fine art work in the sixties, at times reminiscent of the paintings of Gustave Courbet, was seen in an April 1967 one-man show at Manhattan's Harry Salpeter Gallery on 57th Street. More recent one-man shows have been held on Long Island at the Harbor Gallery in Cold Springs Harbor. He currently does watercolor, pastel and oil landscapes, in addition to teaching at the High School of Art and Design. One of his former students is cartoonist Larry Hama, whose work has appeared in ESQUIRE, CRAZY, OZ and BRIDGE.*

THAT NEXT MORNING--THE TRIAL BY COMBAT BEGAN!
CRASHH!
ON AND ON THEY FOUGHT--RIPPING, TEARING, CUTTING MAIMING ONE ANOTHER, UNTIL--
THIS IS YOUR...FINISH...SIR GWAINE ...YOUR FINISH--
NO! NO! AGGHHH!
CLANG!
CRACK!
SIR GWAINE IS THE VICTOR! ALL HAIL THE VICTOR!
YOU HAVE DONE ADMIRABLY, SIR GWAINE! AND YOU SHALL HAVE YOUR REWARD--! THE HIGHEST REWARD OF THIS LAND! ALL MY NOBLES AND LADIES SHALL FOREVER ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR VICTORY OVER SIR HUGO!
CRAASHH!
KLONG!
KRANGG!
AND TWO MONTHS AFTERWARDS--ON THE KING'S JOUSTING FIELDS..
HIS MAJESTY HAS BEEN MOST GRACIOUS TO THEE, SIR GWAINE! TRULY--THE HONOR HE BESTOWED UPON THEE CANNOT BE EXCELLED!
IT WAS MOST KIND OF HIM, ROBERT --BUT ONLY LOGICAL--FOR I AM NOW THE PERFECT CHOYCE! IT MATTERS NOT THAT ELIZABETH HAS BROKEN HER ENGAGEMENT TROTH TO ME! OTHER AFFAIRS ARE MORE URGENT!
SO SAYING, OUT STEPPED SIR IVAN GWAINE FROM HIS TENT THAT BRIGHT SUNNY DAY IN MERRY ENGLAND--CHANGED BY DAILY BATTLE AND COMBAT--TO THE UGLIEST MAN IN THE KINGDOM--THE GREATEST KNIGHT OF ALL--THE KING'S EXECUTIONER--THE BLACK KNIGHT!
The End

have worked on it, but it was that same sort of...like the knees never had any...there was never any knee, it just sort of...it was like one noodle from the hip to the feet, you know. No knees. The leg was...it was just sort of bent, you know. There was no joint in it. Er...Kurtzman's art, again, left something to be desired. Especially when you put Kurtzman up against, you know, those sharp shooters he was working with up there. It suffered by comparison.

Krigstein's work didn't suffer by comparison or anything because there was nothing you can compare it to. He's sort of an original. I don't like to pass judgment on anybody else's work, you know, 'cause *[laughs]* whatever I think isn't really worth a lot anyway.

How do you feel about Frazetta's work?

Well, he's got to be one of these young cats, wasn't he? I mean, he still is fairly young, I imagine. I saw the guy once or something. I don't know ... he was just going through. Some young guy with a dungaree jacket on or something. He and Al Williamson, when did they... did they live together or something? I don't know whether they shared the same studio or...

Williamson, Frazetta and Krenkel sort of all worked on each other's stories.

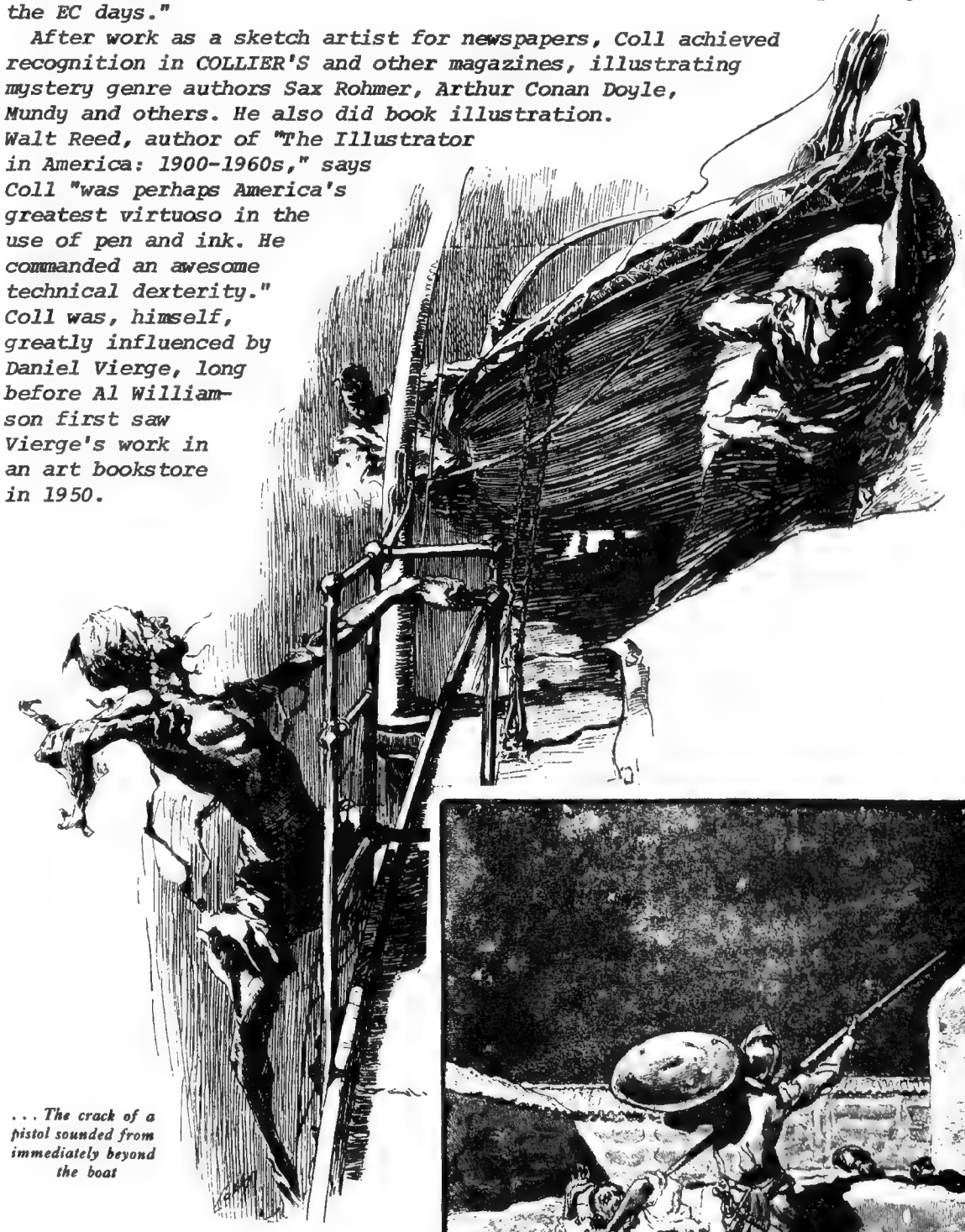
Yeah. They were practically, you know, you could take them and you could sort of lump them all together. But they were, again now, they're... they got hipped on one guy. They all thought the sun, you know, shines on Burne Hogarth. I mean, Christ, everybody looked like Tarzan. A guy takes off his shirt and he's got more goddamn muscles flying around than you can count. Everything was an anatomical study. You look at some of Burne Hogarth's early stuff, when he first took over TARZAN after Hal Foster left it, and er...Christ, Hogarth could hardly draw *at all!* It seems to me they lost sight of an awful lot of stuff by just settling down and doing Burne Hogarth, 'cause there were other people who were doing equally as well.*

[Lights cigarette.] There used to be an awful lot of good guys. Lou Fine was an ace way back when. Lou Fine used to... you know, with all these brushstrokes, you're trying to shade something, and, I don't know why, but it used to be referred to as "fishhooks" when I was at Powell's. Trying to get a soft edge on something. So instead of putting down a hard line, you'd get a whole bunch of little brushstrokes next to each other. Alex Raymond did that to perfection. According to Bob Powell, Lou Fine was another one who could just, you know, he could make a brush *talk.*

We're almost out of tape on this beast here. *[Indicates tape recorder as it stops and hums quietly.]*

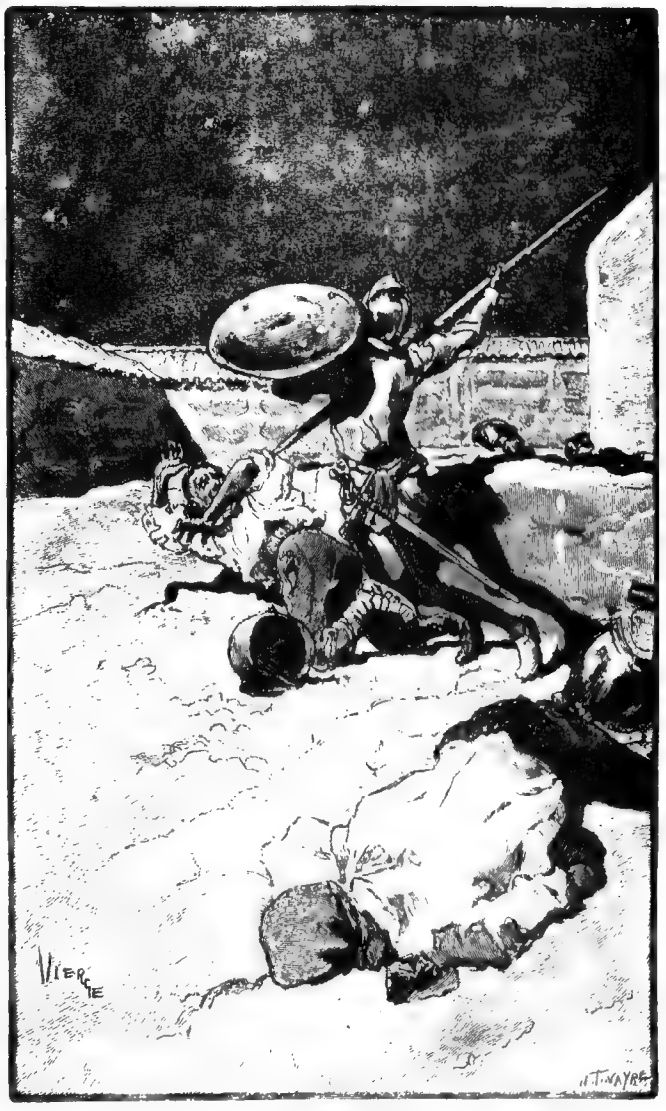
** Al Williamson disagrees completely with Hogarth being an influence. In 1948 Williamson pencilled four Sunday TARZAN pages; this was the extent of his work for Hogarth, and he states flatly, "I don't think that way. It's not my way of drawing." He also feels fan writers have overemphasized the importance of Alex Raymond on his work. Instead, he cites illustrators Joseph Clement Coll (1881-1921) and Daniel Urrabieta Vierge (1851-1904), along with Alex Toth, Roy Crane, Milton Caniff and Wally Wood, commenting, "I always looked at Wally's work for inspiration. It was full of wonder." Of Coll and Vierge (pronounced Vee-urge) he says, "They did influence me, especially in the EC days."*

After work as a sketch artist for newspapers, Coll achieved recognition in COLLIER'S and other magazines, illustrating mystery genre authors Sax Rohmer, Arthur Conan Doyle, Mundy and others. He also did book illustration. Walt Reed, author of "The Illustrator in America: 1900-1960s," says Coll "was perhaps America's greatest virtuoso in the use of pen and ink. He commanded an awesome technical dexterity." Coll was, himself, greatly influenced by Daniel Vierge, long before Al Williamson first saw Vierge's work in an art bookstore in 1950.

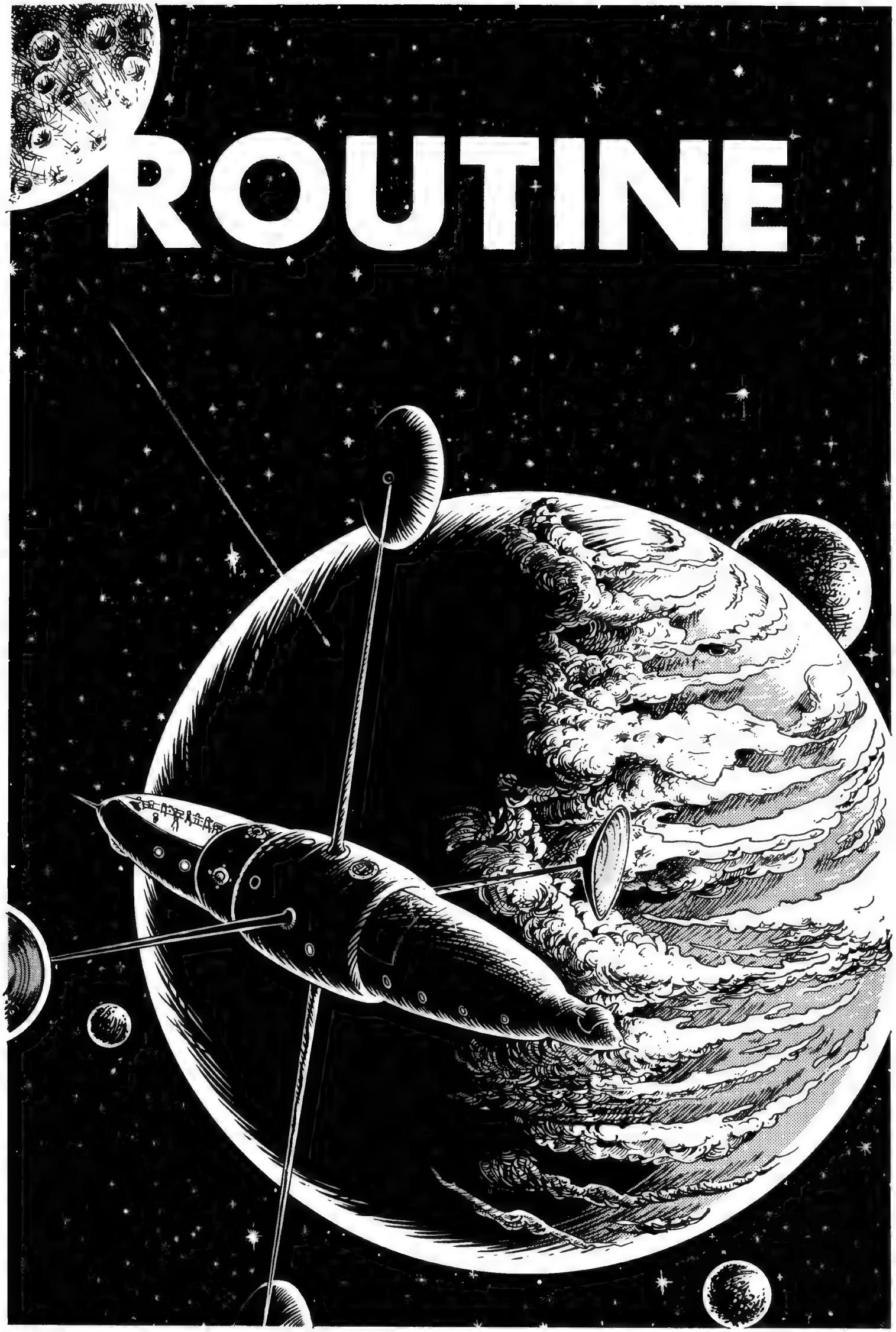


. . . The crack of a pistol sounded from immediately beyond the boat

Spanish illustrator Vierge, son of draftsman Urrabieta Ortiz, took his mother's name. In 1866 he went to Paris where he worked for MONDE ILLUSTRE and VIE MODERNE. His DON QUIXOTE illustrations are his most famous, but he also illustrated Poe, Zola, Quevedo and Hugo. At the age of 30 his right side was paralyzed. He then proceeded to do some of his best work, after learning how to draw with his left hand.



"Don Quixote, without speaking a word or asking any one's favour, again loosed his shield and again raised his lance."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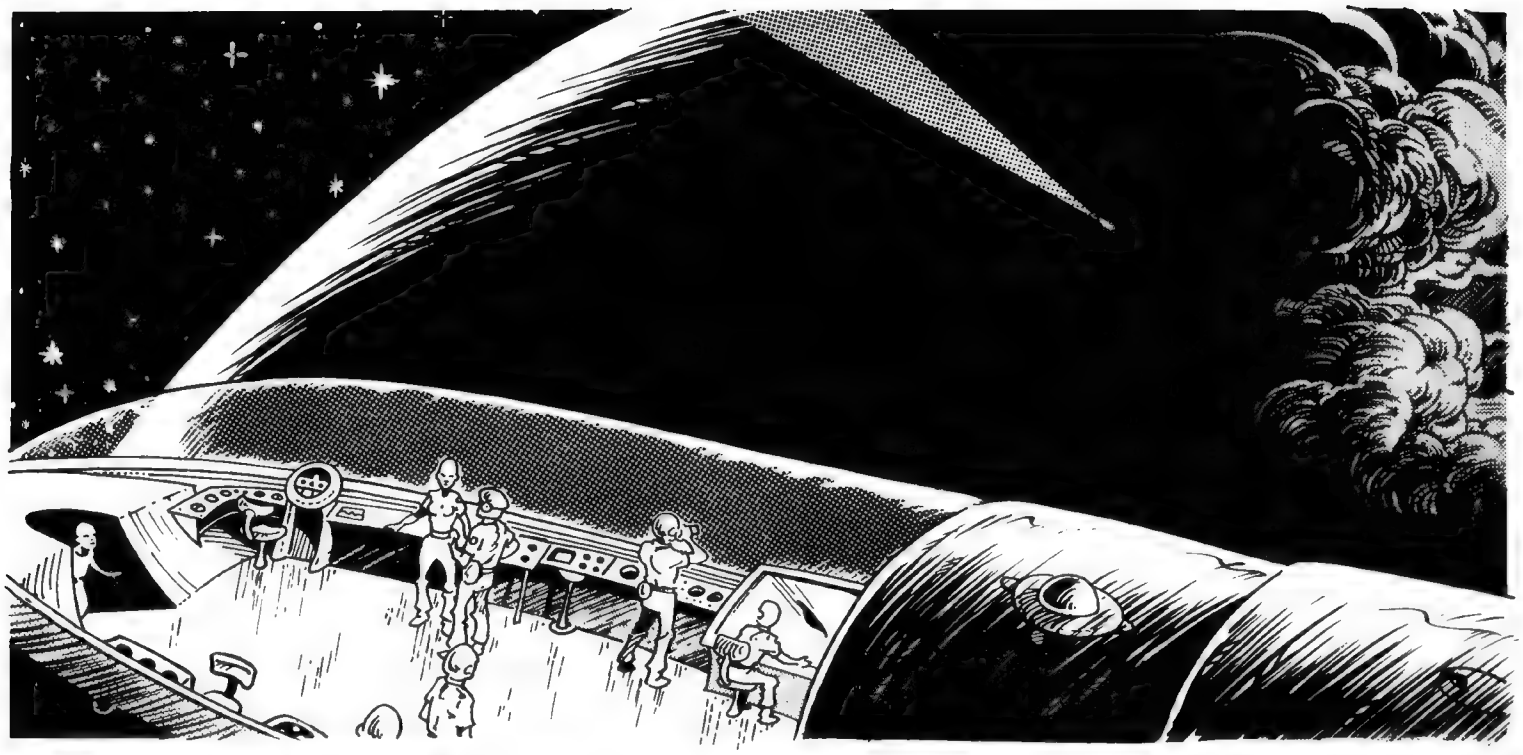

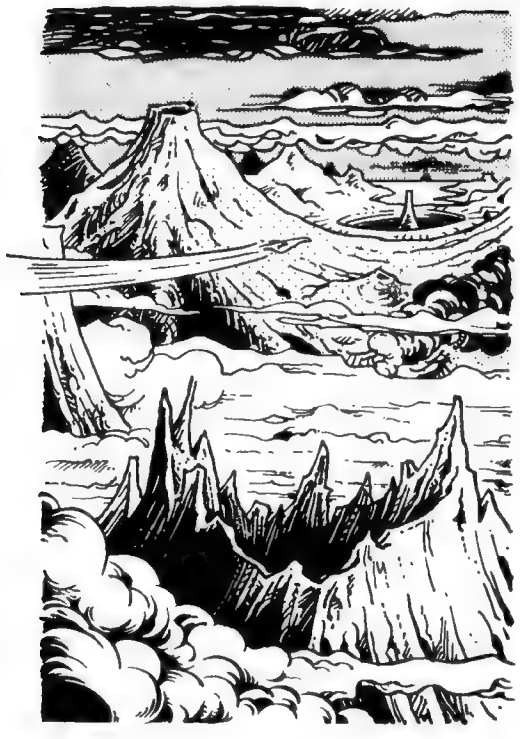

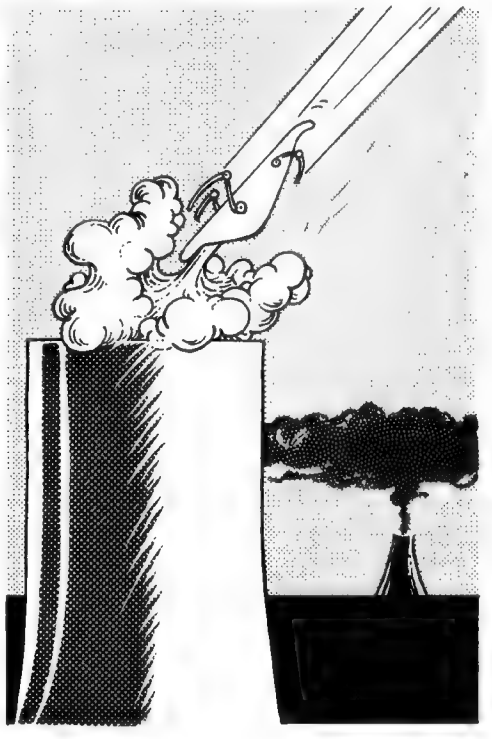

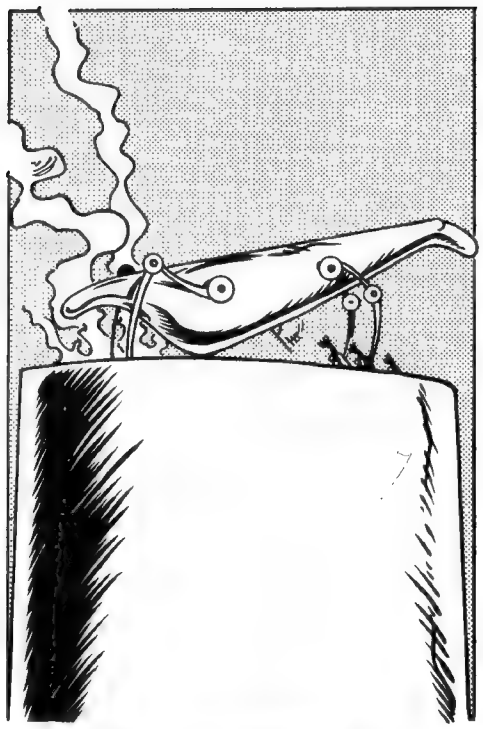

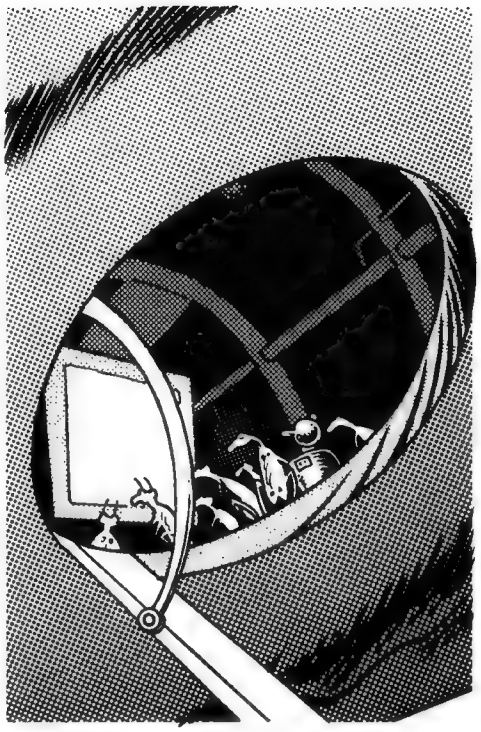

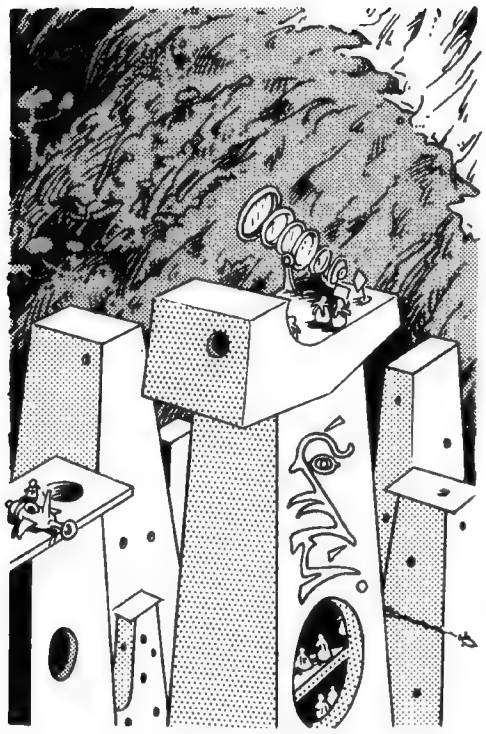

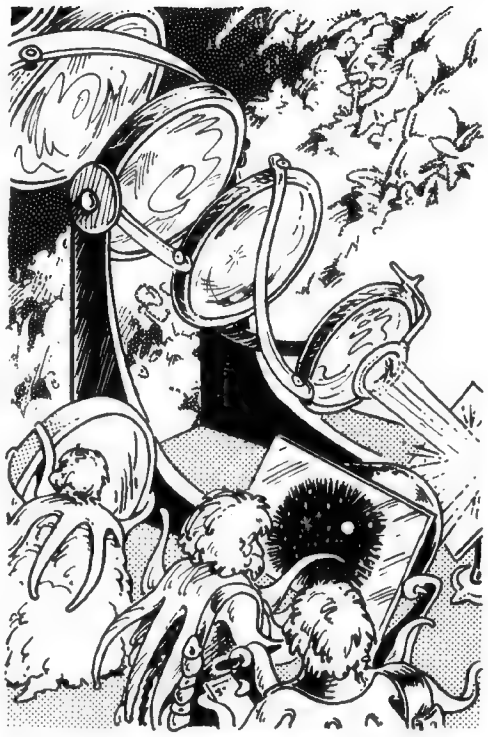

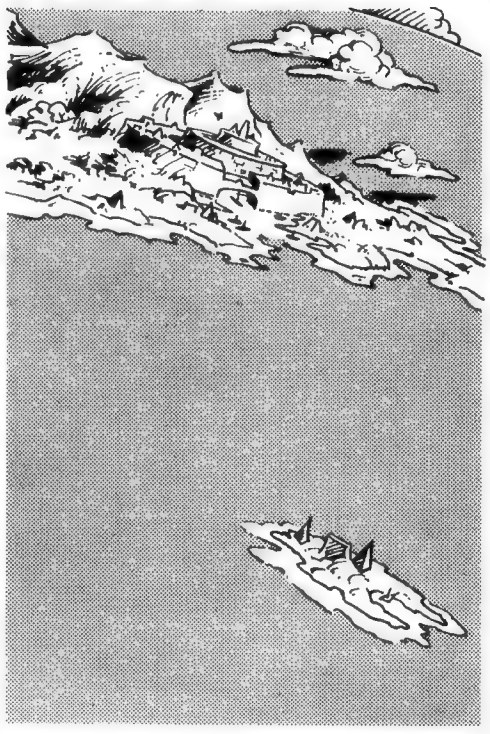

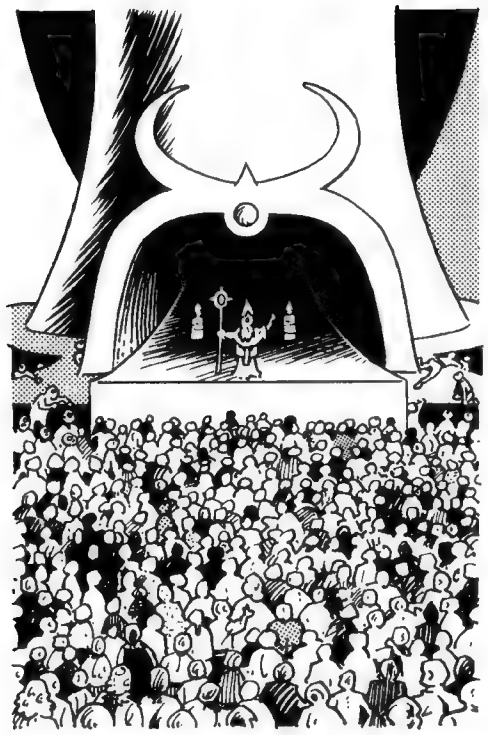

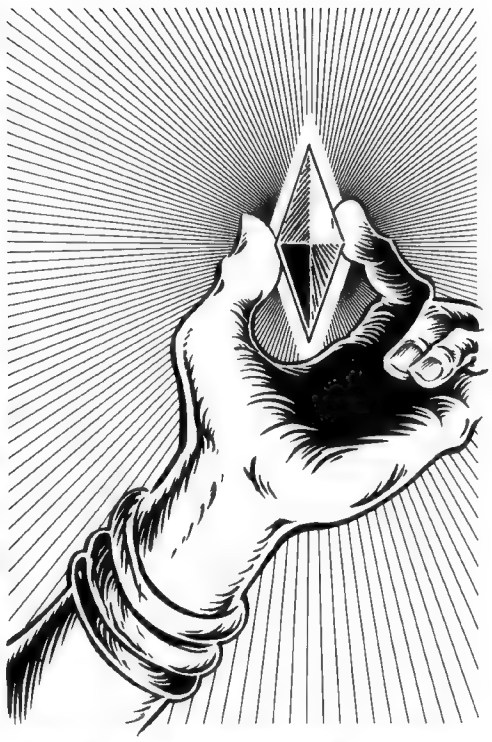

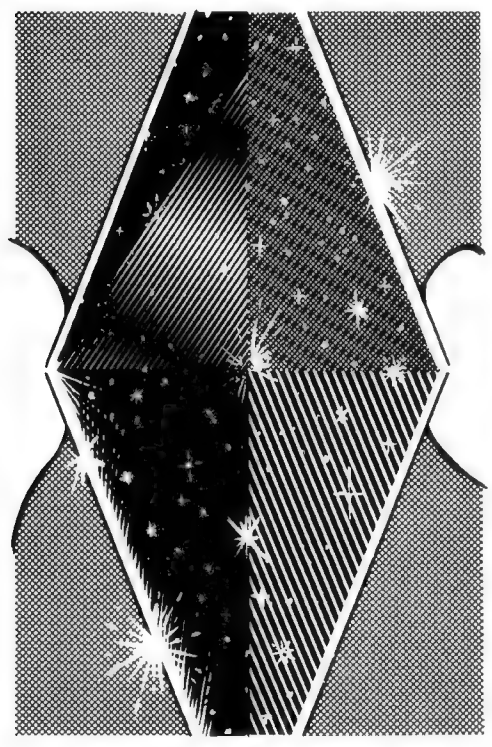

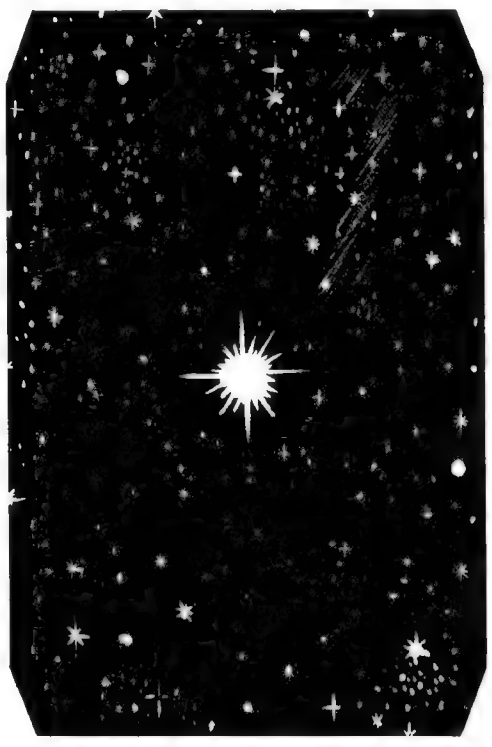

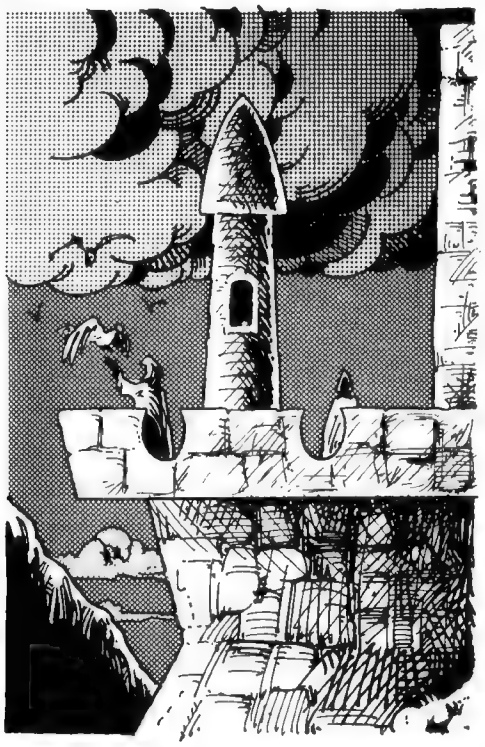
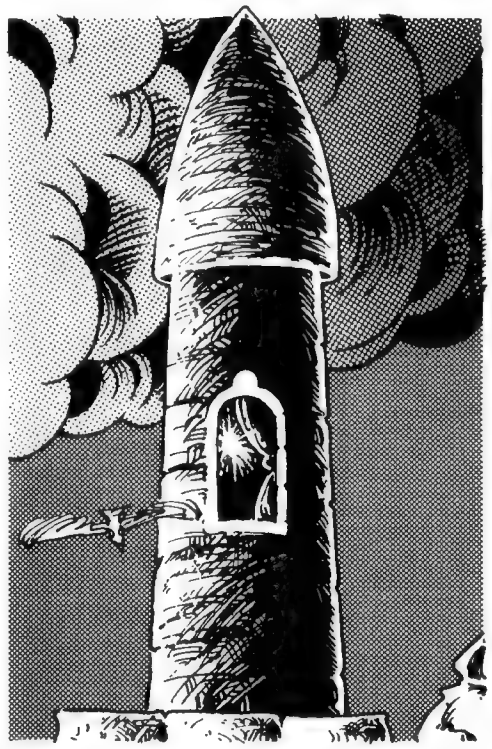

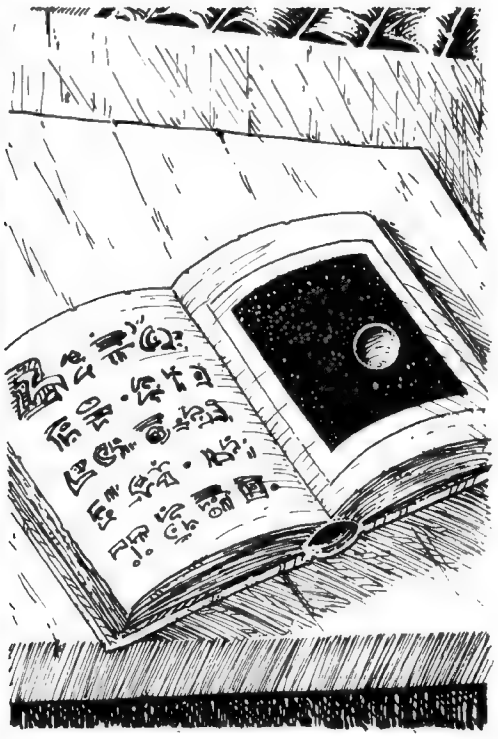

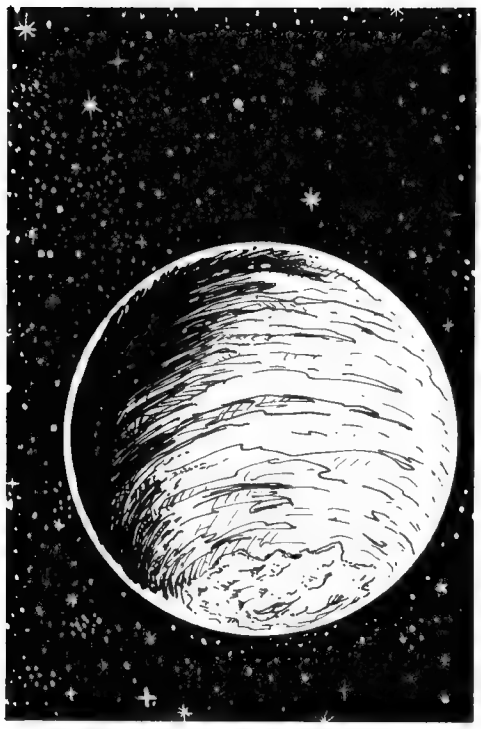

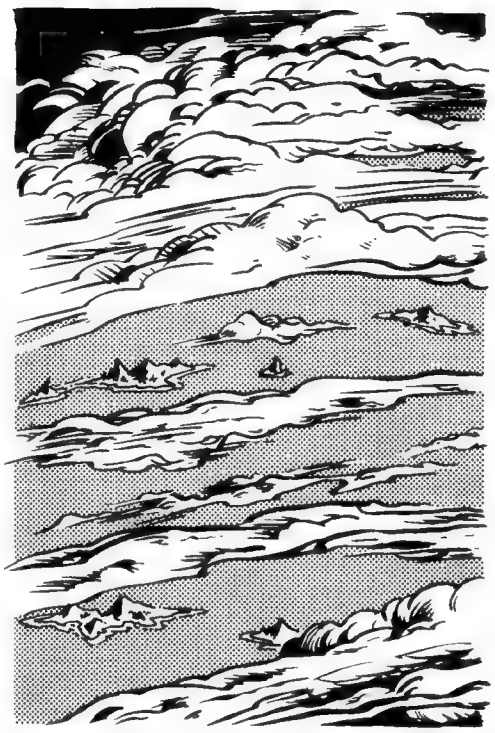

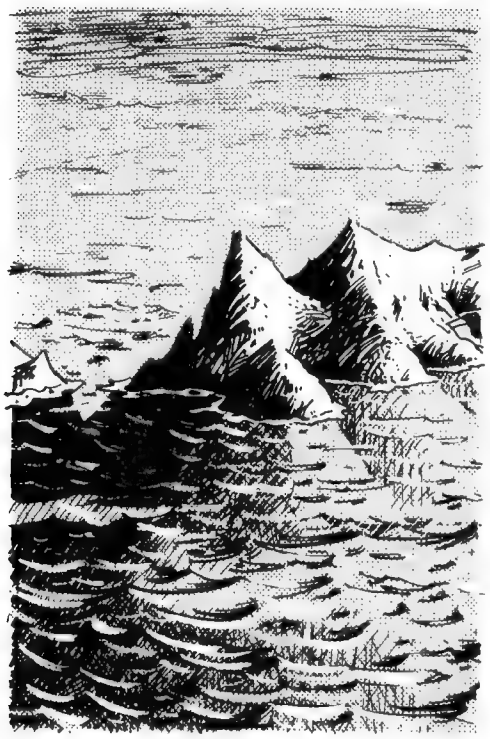

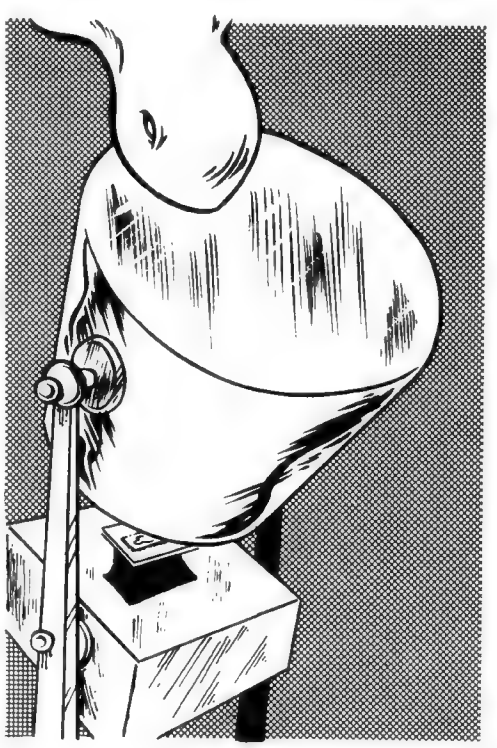

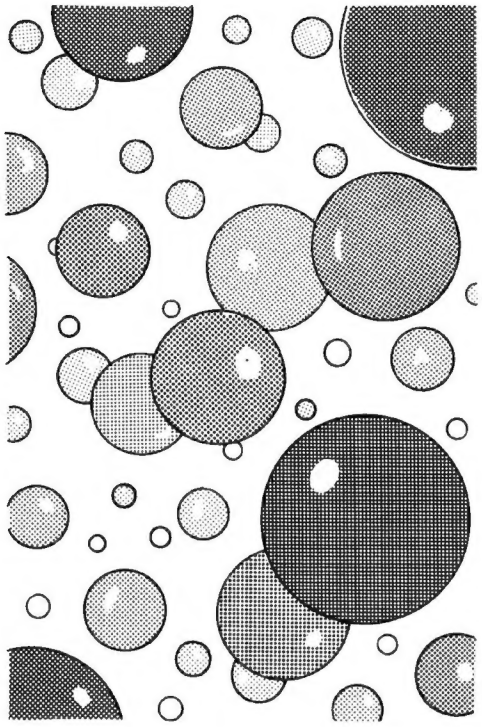

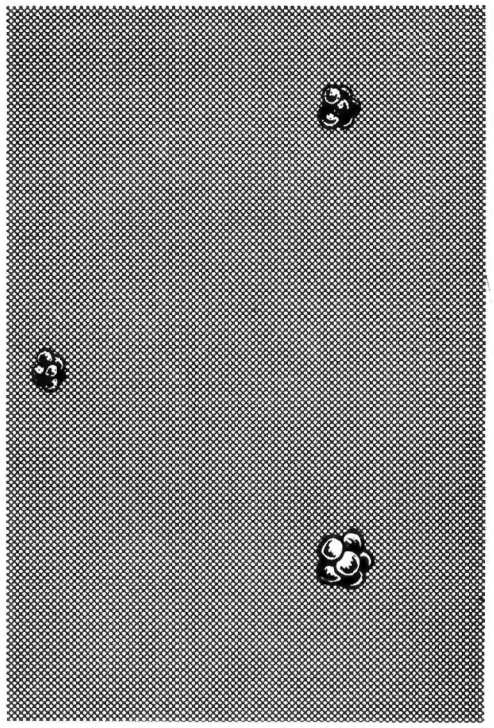

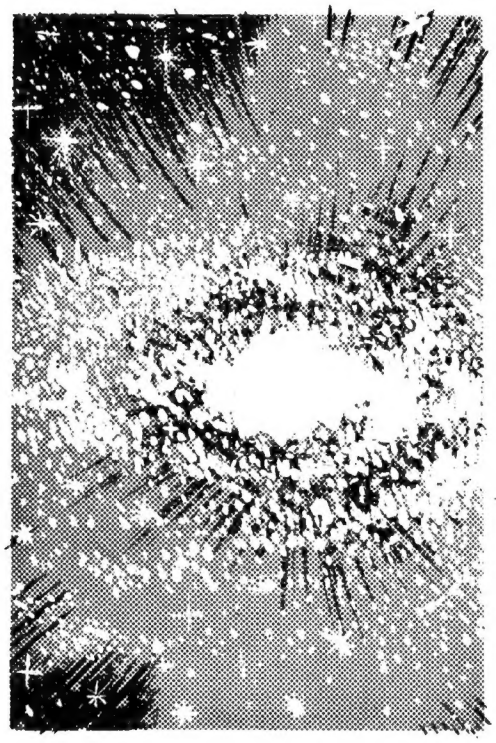

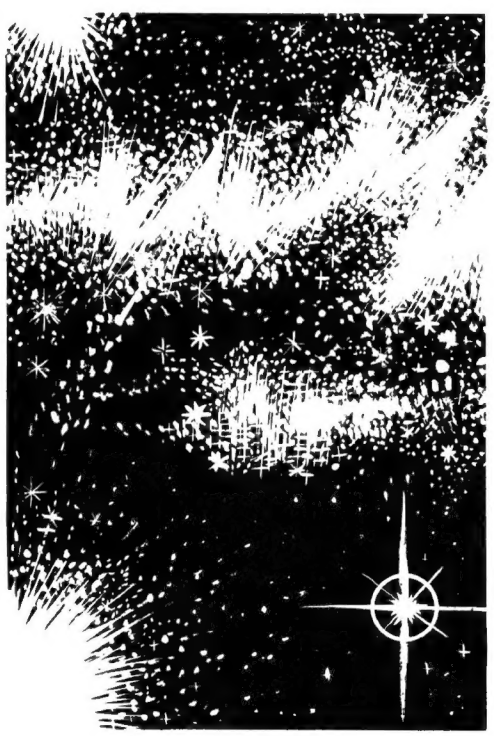

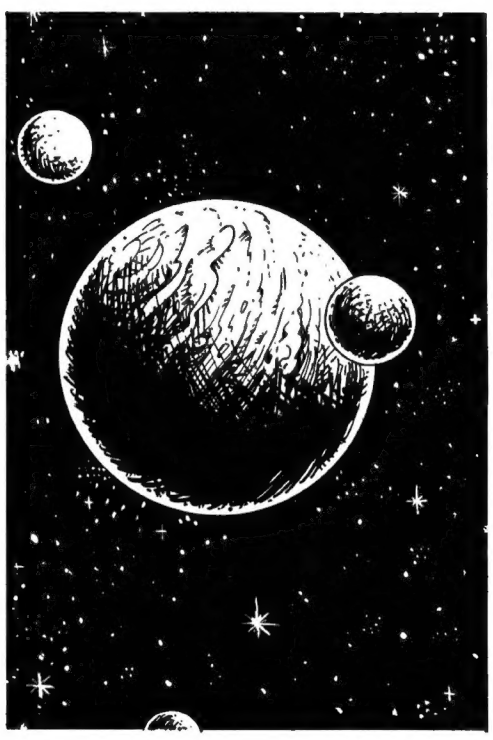

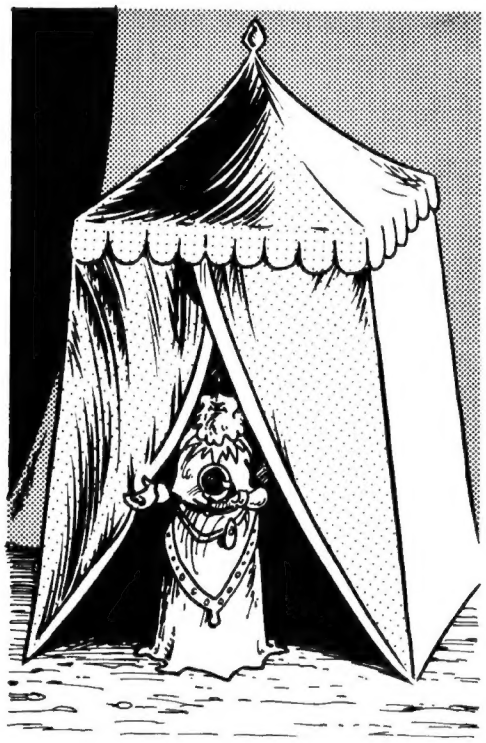

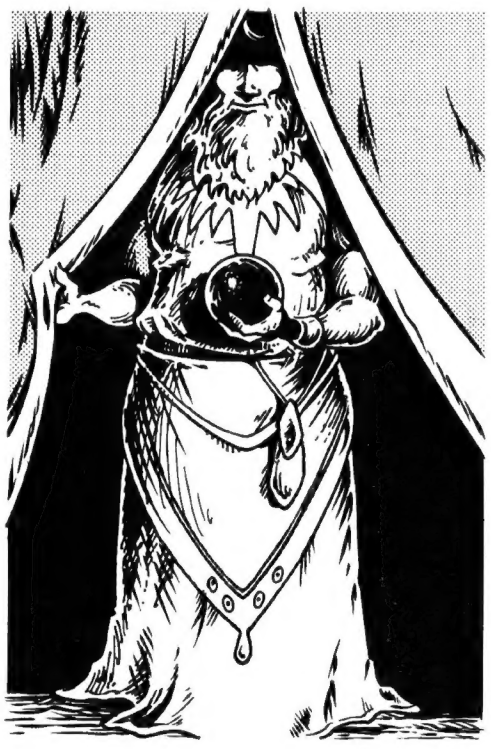

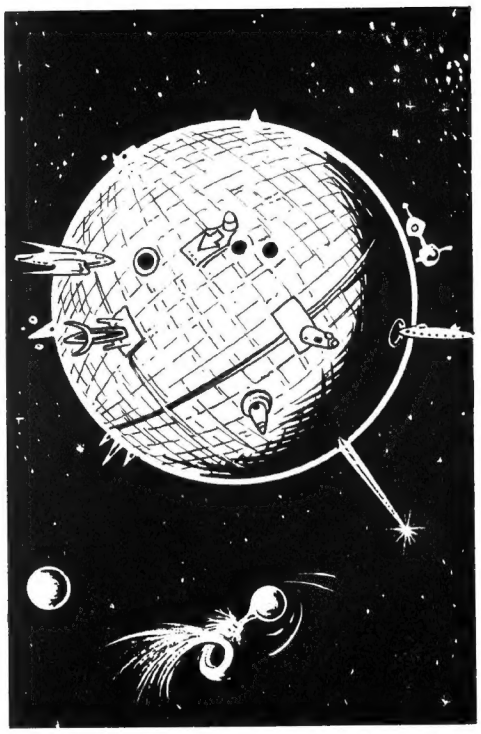

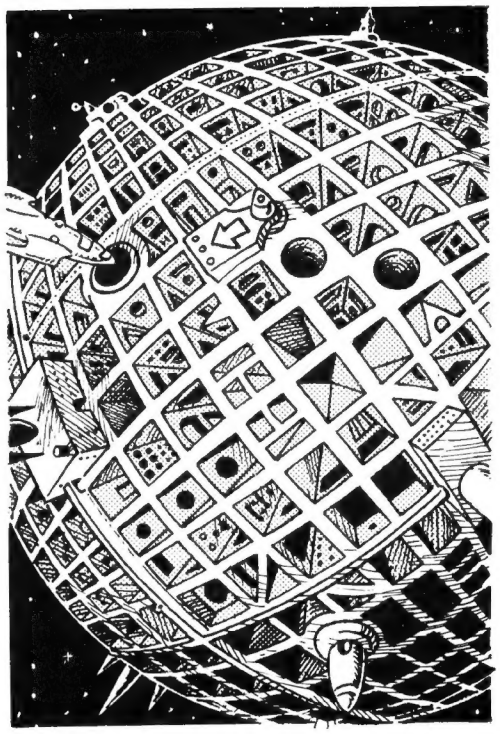

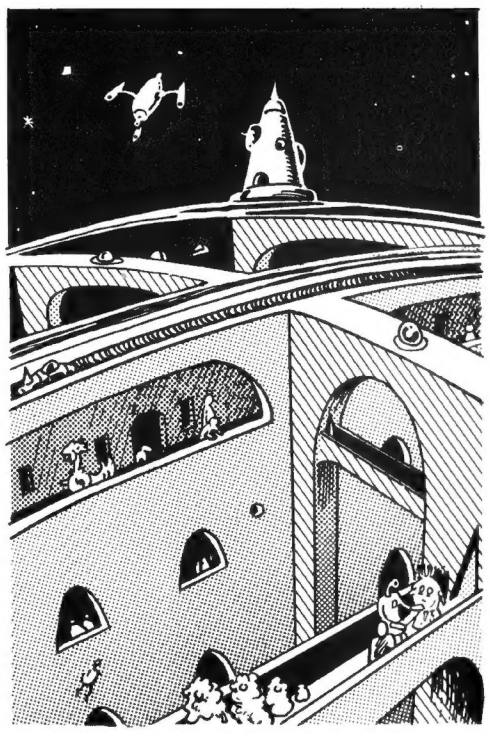

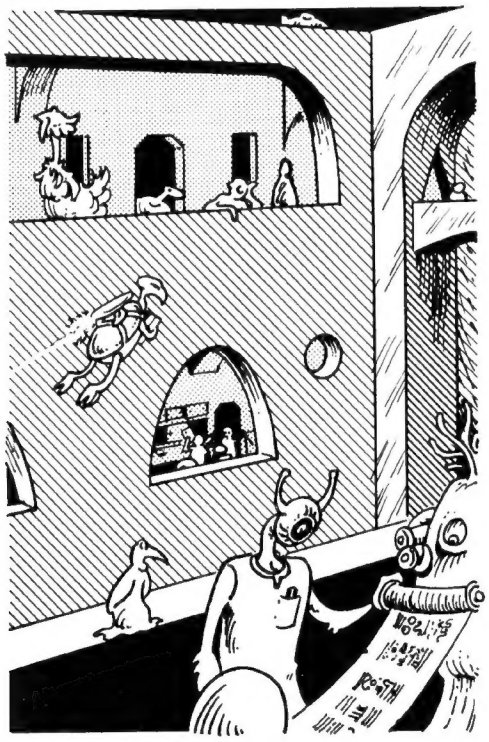

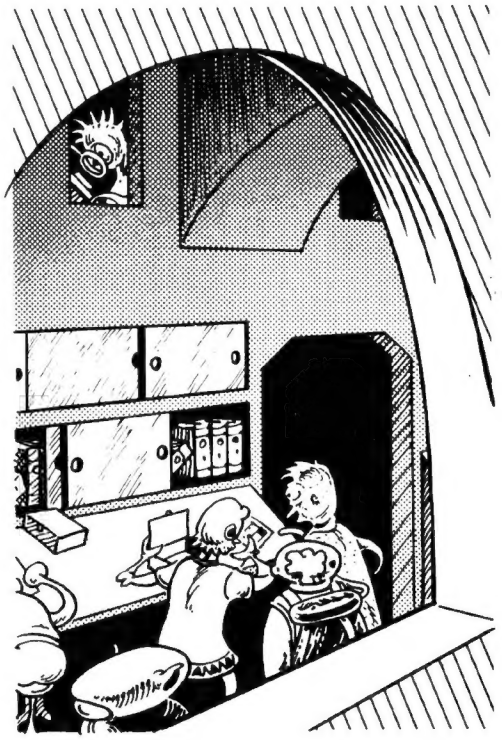

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